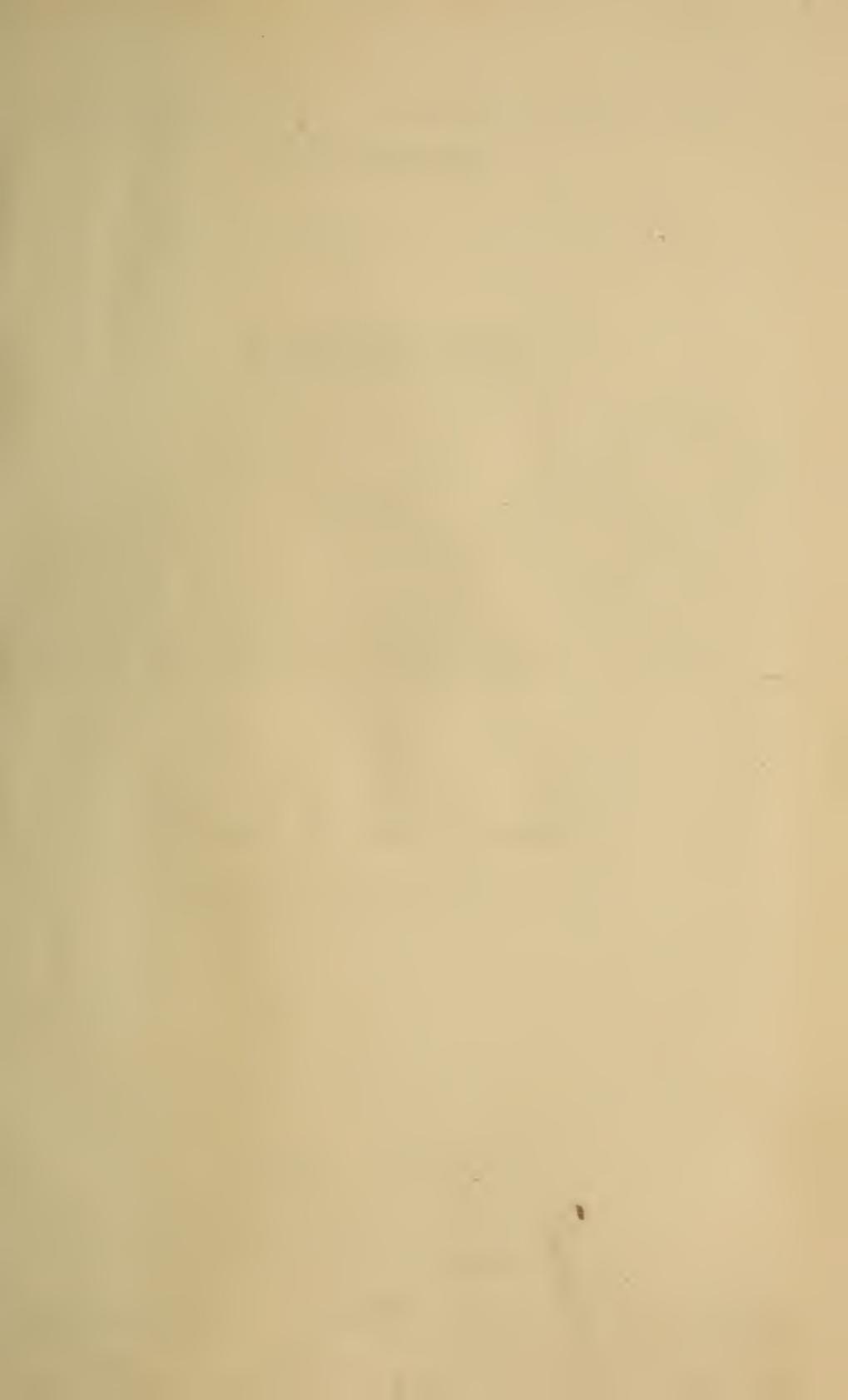


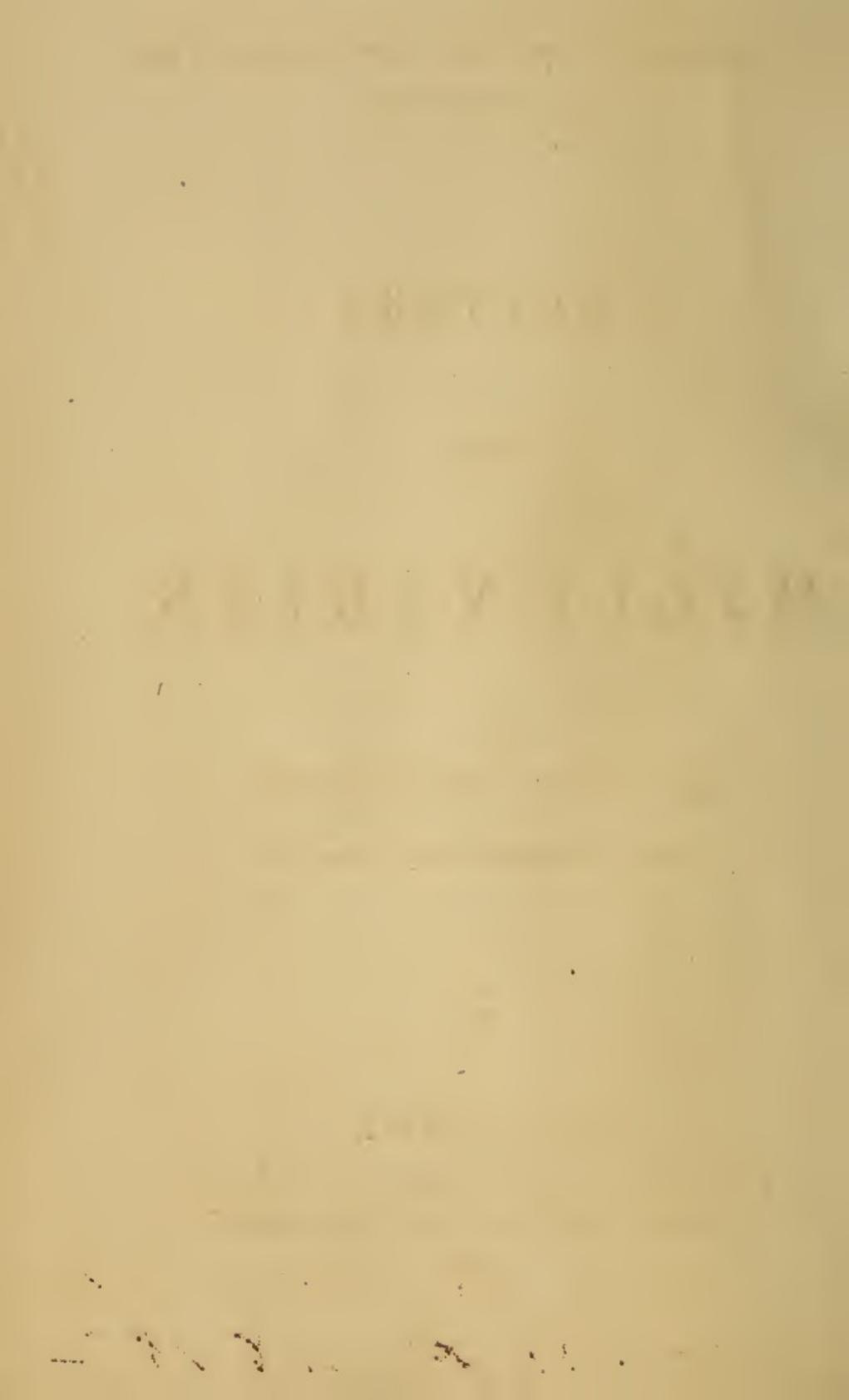
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THE PRESENT JEWS NOT THE LAWFUL HEIRS OF THE
ABRAHAMIC WILL.

LETTERS

TO A

1871

MILLENNARIAN.

BY REV. A. WILLIAMSON,

Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Chester, N. J.

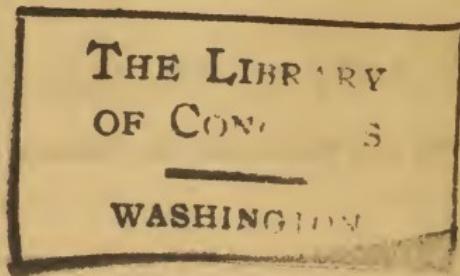
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Introduction to the Reader.

THE writer of these letters, when he began this investigation, had no thought of doing more than, by a familiar correspondence with a Millenarian friend, to try to satisfy his own mind as far as he could in relation to the views of Millenarians, and he now presents them to the public, rather as a matter of inquiry, than as an attempt to lead others to adopt the views they contain ; for he is aware that they diverge, in one point at least, so far from the common views, even of those who utterly reject the Millenarian views, that he can hardly venture to believe his own conclusions. And yet, after presenting these views to a number of friends, and hearing their remarks, he cannot get away from those conclusions to which he has arrived ; and he now, in ac-

cordance with the expressed wishes of a few friends, presents them in this way to the public, hoping to draw the attention of some more able student of the prophets to the distinct question—Who are, at present, the recognized seed of Abraham, to whom the promises belong ?

In these letters, the covenant promises of God to Abraham and his seed, as explained and expounded by the prophets, are viewed under the character of a will, or testament, as Paul calls it, Heb. 9 : 15-19, in which God by covenant promises to bequeath to Abraham and his seed rich legacies, to be paid over to them in successive generations, as these legacies become due according to the terms of the will, and it is taken for granted, that all the prophetic promises to God's covenant people, were included in the covenant promises to Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

With this view before the mind, the
1st. First inquiry which naturally presents itself, at this distant period from the date of the will, is, who are at present the lawful heirs to this will ? And,

2d. What legacies are still due to these heirs ?

In attempting to find who are at this day, the heirs to the Abrahamic will, the writer does not take it for granted, that every man calling himself a Jew, a descendant of Abraham, is consequently an heir, or that every uncircumcised person is not.

And here, it may perhaps as well be stated, as any where, that the conclusion to which the writer has been led, right or wrong, is, that the present people scattered over the world, calling themselves Jews, have according to their own law, broken their covenant with God, forfeited their claim to being, in a scriptural sense, the seed of Abraham and heirs to the promises made to him, and are at present no more to be considered the covenant people of God ; because descended from Abraham, than the Ishmaelites or the Edomites ; and that consequently they are not spoken of as the seed of Abraham by any of the Old Testament prophets, after the death of Christ ; and that there appears, therefore, no promise in the Old or New Testament, that

they will ever return as a nation, either as the church, or to the church, or any other way, except as individuals in common with the Gentiles.

This result was as unexpected to the writer, when he commenced this investigation, as it can be to the reader, and yet he seems forced to it.

The following process is adopted: Beginning with Abraham, it is found, that from the first, only a few of the descendants of Abraham were ever counted as heirs, only one of Abraham's eight children, and only one of Isaac's two. After that there were some twenty laws, the penalty of which, was exscision from the people of God, as heirs, and that Gentile converts became heirs. See Ex. 12 : 48. So that when Paul says, "they are not all Israel which are of Israel," he seems to imply, that even then we must apply the terms of the will and law, as explained by the inspired writers, to determine who were the lawful heirs.

In these short letters, the writer has followed in a very cursory manner the history of the seed of Abraham, and by applying

the conditions of the will and the law, has endeavored to determine who in successive ages were the lawful heirs. As stated before, from the first, only a few were. At first they were dropped, so that in the third generation only one sixteenth part were counted, fifteen were dropped out of sixteen. After this they were cut off for the violations of the conditions of the will, as explained by Moses—as was the case with the uncircumcised man-child, and with idolaters. So that the ten tribes, when they as a nation, set up their golden calves, thereby seem to have incurred the penalty of exscision from the heirs of promise, and were in consequence sent captive from Canaan, and that without any promise, that the writer has discovered, connected with the threatened expulsion, that as a nation they would ever be brought back, as was the case repeatedly when afterward Judah was threatened ; except so far as they fell to, and became one with Judah. Here again, ten tribes out of twelve were, or appear to be left out of the heirs, and the smaller part, to be heirs.

Then, when we trace the history of Judah,

down to the time of Christ, we see them again divide into two parties, the smaller, as always, following, and the larger rejecting Christ, and refusing to hear or obey Him, and finally causing Him to be put to death, and seem thereby to incur the penalty of final exscision from all future connection with the people of God, according to the law of Moses ; Deut. 18 : 19, as explained by Peter, Acts, 3 : 23, in farther proof of which they have remained separate now for more than 1800 years. The penalty here, as explained by Peter, seems as positive as that of the uncircumcised man-child, and therefore all the heirs that remain after this, are to be found in that party that received Christ as their Saviour, and obeyed Him as their king, and those who fell to him from the other Jews, soon after. To these are afterwards to be added, as always, such Gentile converts as fell to them, however many. So that after this, the line of succession or heirship is to be found, not in the church, as under the old covenant, but only in true believers, as foretold by Jer. 31 : 31. And that therefore, the present Jews are as

essentially Gentile in their true character, though descended from Abraham, as any of the descendants of Ishmael or Esau, and have no more to expect from the promises made to Abraham ; and that the church has no more cause to seek for, and expect their conversion, than that of any other people ; and beyond that, it seems more than intimated, that these scattered Jews as a nation will never be converted, nor amalgamated with other nations, except a few of them, but will always, as now, stand out, in every nation where the Bible is read, as beacons of warning to them of the fearful consequence of rejecting Christ, calling him an impostor, and trampling on his blood.

These views seem corroborated by the teachings of Christ and his apostles, and by the fact, that no prophet of the Old Testament, so far as the writer can discover, has ever distinctly taught, that the Jews would ever go into captivity after they were carried to Babylon, but the contrary ; and still less, that the Jews, as Jews, would be carried captive by the Romans after the final capture and destruction of Jerusalem :

nor has he been able to find that they speak of them at all, as the seed of Abraham, when referring to a period beyond the death of Christ.

Christ seems the only prophet, who distinctly speaks of their dispersion after his death, and he certainly does not tell us plainly, (nor do any of the New Testament writers, all of whom were Jews in covenant,) that those whom He denominates children of their father, the devil, will ever be brought back to their own land again, as God's covenant people. So that we are led to the final conclusion, that the only seed of Abraham now remaining, who can claim any of the legacies bequeathed to Abraham and his seed, are true believers, such as those to whom Paul refers, when he says, Gal. 3 : 29, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs, according to the promise." Whether these views are substantiated by the following letters, the readers must determine for themselves when they have read them. If they are not, and cannot be, the writer is as anxious as any other to see where he has been led astray.

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR :—So far as I have been able to understand your views on the general subject of millenarianism, they seem to be something like this. The promises made by the Lord to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and repeated by the Prophets, included great blessings, a small part of which blessings were received by the Jews when they were put in possession of the promised land of Canaan ; but that much the larger part of these promised blessings are yet in reserve for them, and are to be received by them when they shall again have been put in possession of that land, and the Lord Jesus Christ shall in person reign over them in Jerusalem, and be the personal dispenser of these promised blessings.

Or, in plainer terms, that the will of our Lord bequeathed by covenant promise to Abraham and his seed, or descendants,

great riches, temporal and spiritual, to be paid over to them in different ages of the world, a small part of which was paid over to the Israelites in former days, but that much the larger part is yet to be paid over to them at a future period of their history, when they shall again be put in possession of the land of their fathers, and Christ shall in person reign over them there.

Now, if it be admitted that there are legacies yet due to the seed of Abraham and heirs of the covenant promises, to be paid to them at a future period, then at this distant period from the date of that will, the first question to be examined seems to be, "who are the lawful heirs to these rich legacies ? Does it follow that the present people scattered over the world claiming to be Jews descended from Abraham are certainly the lawful heirs, when it is certain that a larger number of the descendants of Abraham are, or may be still living, who are not known under that name?" We think not. Besides, it is an undoubted fact, that a great number of the descendants of Abraham forfeited all claim to these cove-

nant promises by the violation of those laws the penalty of which was excision from that people, and many others, such as the descendants of Ishmael and Esau, were never included. The mere fact, therefore, that the present nation of the Jews claim that name, and all nations agree to let them retain it, does not prove that they are the heirs to these rich legacies. It often happens that a large inheritance descends to a female heir, who by marriage has changed her name, and so the estate descends to persons of another name, while there are many relatives of the same name who are not in the line of succession, and therefore though they have the same name, are not heirs of the estate at all. How, then, do we know that the present people claiming the name of Jews, are the lawful heirs, when it is certain that all the descendants of Abraham are not heirs ? For the Lord himself said that the son of the bond woman should not be heir with the son of the free. We think then, that the first question to be settled is, who are at this day the recog-

LETTERS TO A MILLENARIAN.

nized seed of Abraham and heirs of the promises made to Abraham and his seed.

If a careful examination of this question leads to the conclusion that the present Jews claiming to be the seed of Abraham, have forfeited all claim to those legacies, and are therefore not in the line of succession, as we are inclined to think it will, then it will follow that no promises made to Abraham and his seed by the Lord, and repeated by the Prophets, can belong to them, and we must look elsewhere for the heirs of all the legacies yet due to the seed of Abraham.

It has, therefore, appeared to me, that a definite answer to the question who are the heirs to the unfulfilled prophetic promises to Abraham and his seed, would relieve the explanation of the prophecies relating to the Jews of some of their difficulties. If it be found that the Jews, who are scattered through the different nations of the world, both Israel and Judah, are the heirs of these rich legacies, then these prophecies are to be explained so as to meet that view. But

if, on the contrary, it be found that they have, according to the plain law of God, forfeited all claim to those promises, and that Abraham has other children who have not, and are therefore the legitimate heirs to these unfulfilled prophetic promises, or those rich legacies, then the prophecies must be explained to meet that view.

Now, although an answer to this question has generally been admitted to be given in a sufficiently clear manner by the Prophets themselves, yet it is manifest that the different writers on the prophecies relating to the Jews have had different, though it may be not very definite answers to this question before their minds, which has led to equally different views, as to the true meaning of some of these prophecies.

The object of the following letters will be, as far as possible, to determine who are the lawful heirs to these unpaid prophetic legacies, and thus to endeavor to open the way to a more uniform understanding of the Scriptures and the consequent duties of the Church to the scattered tribes of Israel.

In examining the question who are heirs to a will, both the law of the land and the conditions of the will are to be carefully examined. Some time since a report reached this country by a letter from England, that a man in England by the name of Townly had died and left a large estate to his heirs, who were in America, and were supposed to be in New Jersey. Persons of that name supposing they were no doubt the heirs, collected together and sent to England to learn more about the matter, when to their sorrow, they learned that the only heir to said deceased was a daughter named Mary, who married a man whose name was Lawrence; so that, according to the law of descent, the heirs were now called by a different name, and that therefore no man by the name of Townly could now be an heir unless by another change in a future marriage; so that though the testator was Townly, yet the lawful heirs were not, but were called by another name.

Now, suppose that after this, the conditions of the will had been found to be, as the will was in England,

1. That if any of the descendants were unbaptized, they were to be cut off from the heirs, and consequently from the inheritance, and it was found that half of the descendants were actually unbaptized, would not any judge decide that the estate belonged not to the unbaptized, but wholly to the baptized, for so the testator had decreed ? But suppose

2. The will further stated, that if any of those who were baptized should not receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper after they arrived at the age of twenty years, that then they should be cut off from the number of his heirs and forfeit their inheritance. Would not a judge decide again, that all over twenty years who could not prove that they had received the sacrament, though baptized had forfeited their part of the inheritance, and that the whole belonged to that part of the baptized descendants, who could prove that they had received the sacrament ? But suppose

3. The will stated further, that all who did not receive the sacrament from the hand of a Presbyterian minister, though they re-

ceived it from ministers of other denominations, should forfeit their heirship and be cut off, and it was found that many of the baptized descendants who had received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, were not in connection with the Presbyterian Church, and had therefore received the sacrament—not from a Presbyterian minister, but from others. Would not the judge again be compelled to decide that all such had forfeited their inheritance, and that the whole belonged to the few that had not forfeited their heirship by violating the conditions of the will of the testator? I think all will admit that the judge must so decide, whether he thought the will a good one or not.

Now must we not follow the same rule in examining the will of our Lord and Saviour in which he has bequeathed rich legacies to Abraham and his seed; and if it be found that a large part of the descendants of Abraham have, by violating the conditions of that will, forfeited their character as heirs, and consequently their inheritance, must we not conclude that all that is still due of those legacies belongs to that part of

the heirs who have not violated the conditions of the will, by whatever name they may be called? Why is it not as true in the latter case as in the former? In this conclusion it is thought all will agree.

In looking over the will of our Lord, among many things a little obscure, the following seem to be plain in the conditions of the will as recorded.

1. That of the seed of Abraham, the uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off.—Gen. 17: 14.

2. That of the circumcised seed, Isaac shall alone be heir.—Gen. 21: 12.

3. That of Isaac's seed, Jacob only should be heir.—Gen. 27: 27-29, and 28: 10-14.

4. That a proselyte from the Gentiles, who was circumcised and partook of the Passover and had all his males circumcised, was counted an heir as one born in the land. See Exodus 12: 48.

5. That for idolatry and many other crimes they were to be cut off from the seed of Abraham.—See Ex. 22: 20, & Lev. 17: 9, 10-14, & 18: 1-29.

6. That the man who, without a specified

reason, should neglect to keep the Passover, should be cut off from the people of God, the heirs of the inheritance promised to the seed of Abraham, &c.—See Num. 9 : 13.

7. That those of the seed of Abraham as before described, who should refuse to hear and obey the promised Saviour when he should come, should be cut off from the people of God, and those only who had not been cut off would be counted for the seed and heirs of the promises.—See Deut. 18 : 15–19. Explained more fully, Acts 3 : 22, 23, & Gal. 3 : 29.

Now, if the forementioned conditions of the will are plain, and all who have violated those conditions, and especially the last, have forfeited their claim to their inheritance, then it seems to follow, that in determining the question who are the lawful heirs to the inheritance promised to the seed of Abraham, we must try it by the conditions therein plainly specified, and especially the last, which seems plainest of all, and which we think is fully explained by Christ and his apostles.

This conclusion, we think, is not weak-

ened by the fact, that when the execution of the law was in the hands of, or committed to the hands of fallible Jews, the penalties of the law were often not executed. A wrong decision in a lower court is no reason why a higher court should not correct it so far as it can be corrected. If the Jews suffered their laws to be trampled upon when the Lord committed to their hands their execution, it is no reason for us to suppose that when Christ takes in his own hands their execution, that he will suffer the conditions of His will to be broken with impunity.

Let us then see if we can determine who are now the lawful heirs to the inheritance promised and yet due to the seed of Abraham.

We shall here take it for granted that all the prophetic promises made to the seed of Abraham and David, are included in the promise made to Abraham, and are only repeated and amplified by the Jewish prophets.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR :—Let us now see if we can determine who, at this distant period, are the heirs to the Abrahamic will. Since Paul says, Rom. 9: 6, “They are not all Israel which are of Israel,” who then are ?

When God first called Abraham from his father’s house, and promised to bless him and his posterity, there was nothing in the form of the promise as recorded, by which he could determine whether all his children were to share in the blessings of the promise, or only a part of them. The Lord simply said, Gen. 12: 2, “I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing,” &c. In this general way the promise was first made, and, if nothing more had been said, we might have been led to suppose that all the descendants of Abraham were included in this promise. But the his-

tory of the event shows that they were not. V. 7, we are told that after Abraham and Sarah had reached and passed over a part of the land of Canaan, "The Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land"—namely, the land of Canaan. Here, again, it would seem as if all were included. About four years after this we are told, Gen. 13: 14, 16, "the Lord said unto Abraham, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward, for all the land which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever, and I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth then shall thy seed also be numbered." Here, again, there is nothing in the form of the promise intimating that any of Abraham's children would be excluded, still less that persons descending from others should be numbered as the children or seed of Abraham, and yet the history of Abraham seems to imply that both events happened, though as yet they were not revealed. Ought not this to teach us

to be cautious how we build theories on predictions?

Again, Gen. 15: 18, after the Lord had informed Abraham that his "seed should certainly be a stranger in a strange land, four hundred years," we are told, he "made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given all this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates." Still, no intimation is recorded that any are to be excluded. But, after the birth of Isaac, when Sarah complains of the conduct of the son of Ishmael, Abraham's first born, Gen. 21: 10, 12, the Lord said that "The son of the bond woman should not be heir with the son of the free woman," and that "in Isaac his seed should be called;" and this was confirmed by the fact that only the descendants of Isaac went into Egypt, where the Lord had declared the seed of Abraham should be in bondage, as we shall hereafter see. Again, Gen. 17: 19, after God had entered into a formal covenant with Abraham and his seed, to be their God, and to give to them the land of Canaan, of which covenant circumcision was to be

the seal ; and, after declaring in the same covenant, v. 14, that the uncircumcised man-child should be cut off from his people, he says again, “ Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac, and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard thee ; behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly, but my covenant will I establish with Isaac.”

Here it is very manifest that the covenant promise was restricted to Isaac alone, who was not yet born, and to his seed, though Abraham had seven other sons after this, as we shall see. So that, from the beginning, only a very small part of the natural descendants of Abraham were actually included among the heirs to the bequests of that will, which bequeathed such rich legacies to Abraham and his seed.

Now, as the general promise of God, to give to the seed of Abraham the whole land of Canaan, did not prove that all his children were included, so the promise to Isaac and

his seed may not secure all his, or even prove that no others will be admitted. We ask then, again, who are the heirs that can, at this distant period, lay claim to these rich legacies? Were all those who were circumcised, heirs?—as those who were not, were to be cut off. We think not, for all the males in Abraham's house were circumcised.—See Gen. 17: 23. Still this was to be the token of the covenant between God and his people, and the man-child who was uncircumcised was to be cut off; while Ishmael, and the other six children of Abraham, though children, and circumcised, were, for no crime mentioned, to be cast off or not reckoned among the people of God: thus showing that as yet we have no definite rule by which we can determine who are the seed and heirs according to the promise, since the great mass were dropped, and not counted, and only a few counted from the first promulgation of the promise. After this, in Gen. 22: 15–18, a little more than twenty years later, the Lord renewed the promise to Abraham, without any intimation that any of Isaac's children were to be excluded. In Gen. 25,

we have the account of Abraham's second marriage—" Then again Abraham took a wife, whose name was Keturah," by whom he had six children, none of whom are counted among the seed of Abraham, as before stated. In Gen. 26 : 24, the promise is repeated to Isaac : " And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father, fear not, for I am with thee and will bless thee, and will multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake." In chap. 25 : 23, we read, " The Lord said unto Rebekah, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thee, and the one people shall be stronger than the other, and the elder shall serve the younger." Here we have the first intimation that a part of Isaac's descendants are to be excluded from the heirs of promise, and yet not so that it could be certainly known how many of Isaac's descendants should be excluded. It was now about eighty-five years since the first promise was made to Abraham, and still as yet we find no certain rule by which to determine who were to be the heirs, except as guided by the successive

revelations given from the Lord to the fathers. In chap. 26: 3-5, the promise which was made to Abraham is repeated to Isaac : "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," but as yet it is general. In the same chapter, verses 33-35, we have the account of Esau selling his birth-right to Jacob ; and chap. 27: 27-9, we have the account of Isaac blessing Jacob, and, by the deception practiced by Jacob and his mother, giving him the blessing he intended for Esau, but which the Lord had intimated to his mother was intended for Jacob, though the younger. After this Esau seems no longer counted among the heirs. So that, in the third generation, we find that only one-sixteenth part of the children of Abraham are actually counted as heirs. Who, then, at this distant period, will venture to say which of Abraham's descendants are the lawful heirs to these promises, without the plain declarations of His word or will to guide us ?

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER III.

Rom. 9: 6. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel.

DEAR SIR :—We have seen in our previous examination, that in the third generation, only one sixteenth part of the descendants of Abraham were actually counted as the heirs of the promise to Abraham, to whom God would give the land of Canaan —a very small part, when yet, the promises were as full to them then, as they are now to the seed of Abraham ; for they were the same, and if these promises did not prove that all the seed of Abraham were then heirs, how can they prove that all or any of those, who now claim to be descended from Abraham, are the lawful heirs ?

In following the history of this interesting people, we find, that as yet, there is but one of the descendants of Abraham who is counted as the seed, when it is at least pro-

bable, that there were at this time hundreds of the descendants of Abraham who were not counted as heirs, for it was now over 130 years since the birth of Isaac ; and the other seven children of Abraham seem to have increased much more rapidly at first, than the heirs of promise. It may be well to keep these facts in view, when we read some of the later prophetic promises respecting the return of the seed of Abraham to the promised land. Those promises may include only the few who have not incurred the penalty of exscision.

Jacob is now sent to Padanaram, where he serves fourteen years for two wives, and besides them, he has two concubines, by all of whom he has twelve sons and one daughter. On his way back to Canaan and to his father's house, his name is changed to Israel, by the angel with whom he wrestled, and though Jacob and Esau seem now reconciled, and were together burying their father, yet we hear nothing of the children of Esau being included among the people of God, the heirs of promise. Jacob and his children were henceforth called Israelites,

and Israel only was the covenant people of God. All Jacob's children seem now to be included, (except the daughter of whom we hear no more among God's people,) though six of his sons were born of a wife put upon him by deception, and four, of bond women ; thus setting aside all former rules of counting heirs, and setting at defiance all analogical rules. These twelve sons in process of time, seem all to have married Gentile wives, had families, and were with their father carried into Egypt, according to the declaration of God to Abraham, Gen. 15 : 13, where they continued two hundred and fifteen years, a part of the time under severe bondage. " And God said unto Abraham, Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger, in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them four hundred years." This expression it will be seen does not accord, with historical accuracy, to the event—and could not possibly have been understood before its fulfilment. But it seems, together with the event recorded, a full evidence, that those only who were now called Israelites, and went into bondage, were count-

ed for the seed and heirs to the promises.

And now, dear Sir, may we not learn from these historical sketches, the following facts, viz.:

1st. That the prophetic promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were of such a general character, that it will not do to explain them literally, as if delivered as history? Take, for example, the promise, Gen. 13:15, "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever;" and yet he, Abraham, never possessed any of that land, except a burying place. Do you say, that he is yet to be put in possession when Christ comes, and that the promise secures this to him? Would not the same rule of interpretation lead us to say that all his seed, good and bad, were to be put in possession, who died in Egypt and in the wilderness, or before—not only the descendants of Jacob, but of all his seed? And if not all, who from the prediction could tell how many? The same is true of all that class of promises.

How, again, would it do to give a literal

interpretation to the prediction, Gen. 15: 13, "Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also, that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge, and afterward shall they come out with great substance?" You will admit, that this prophecy refers to their bondage in Egypt. But they were only two hundred and fifteen years in Egypt, and about seventy years of that time, they were provided for by Joseph, and were not actually in bondage. Nor was the whole sojourning of the Israelites, from the calling of Abraham to their coming out of Egypt, four hundred years; for we are told by Moses, Ex. 12: 40, that their sojournings were four hundred and thirty years. V. 41. "It came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years, that all the host of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt:" thus showing by the history of the event, that a literal fulfilment of the prophecy was not to be expected, and yet, that when these prophecies were fulfilled, they were sufficiently plain to show that nothing but

a God who saw the end from the beginning, could have thus foretold them, and nothing but an Almighty God could have fulfilled them.

2d. That from the beginning, only a small part of the children of Abraham were counted for the seed.

3d. We learn, that from the beginning, we cannot determine, that a person is an heir to the promises, by the fact, that he has descended from Abraham, since many more of his children were always out of the covenant than in. It may be well to keep this in mind, when we come to the question, are the present Jews the heirs to any of these promises made to Abraham, and repeated by the prophets?

Neither can we determine, that they are of Israel, and heirs to the promises, by the fact of their being circumcised—for it is certain, that many, if not all those who have already been dropped, were circumcised, and so were all the three hundred servants of Abraham. So that from the first many more were circumcised who were

not in covenant, and not heirs, than those who were.

4th. We learn, also, that the want of being wholly descended from the seed of Abraham, does not prove, that they are not heirs—for we have seen, that all the sons of Jacob, some of whom were from Gentile mothers, married Gentiles, and so were greatly mixed; and that as soon as the ordinance of the Passover was instituted, permission was given for strangers to join them: see Ex. 12: 48, and Est. 8: 17, where we are told, that many of the people of the land became Jews. So that, as yet, we have no rule by which we can determine prospectively, who are to be the heirs, but must wait the farther and later instruction of the inspired writers; which instructions are doubtless sufficiently plain for all important practical purposes, as they were from the beginning. But these I must defer for my next. In the mean time, please keep in mind the results to which we have come, so far as you admit them, as they may have a bearing on what follows.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR :—I again begin with Paul's words, Rom. 9 : 6 : “ For they are not all Israel which are of Israel.” Who, then, are the true heirs ?

We have seen that no answer can be obtained to this question from the prophetic promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, nor yet from the sign of circumcision, and that only one-sixteenth part of Abraham's descendants were counted heirs down to the time of Jacob, who was first called by the name of Israel ; and now Paul tells us that they are not all Israel which are of Israel even ; so that it seems all his descendants are not to be counted ; at least Paul's words seem to imply this, though perhaps this is not their whole meaning. His twelve sons, however, for the present, seem all to be counted, and all went with their families to Egypt, even those who were born of the bond women.

In tracing the history of Jacob's family, we are led to suppose that all their descendants who were living at the time of Moses, were recognized as Israelites, kept the Passover and came out of Egypt by Moses. But when the Lord instituted the ordinance of the Passover, he allowed them to receive Gentile converts; who then, I suppose, in the language of Esther 8: 17, became Jews, and intermarried; for there was but one law, and "he was to be as one born in the land."—Ex. 12: 43—49.— "This, said the Lord, is the law of the Passover: there shall no stranger eat of it: but every man's servant, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof: and when a stranger shall sojourn with you, and will keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it, and he shall be as one that is born in the land." This surely seems to imply that they might receive Gentiles, and when received they were counted as Jews. How many such were received, we have no means of determining. We have also the fact, Ex. 12: 19, that if

any eat unleavened bread during the seven days following the Passover, he was to be cut off from that people. So that from the first complete organization of the Jewish Church we find only a small part of the descendants of Abraham in it, and those mingled with Gentile converts, and that Jews, for want of circumcision, &c., were cut off. How many converts were received, or how many of the Israelites were cut off by the two execrable laws, we have no means of determining.

After the complete organization of the Jewish Church, none were recognized as belonging to the heirs of promise, who were not in that church, whether Jews or of Gentile origin, while all who were in it were counted heirs. We now find about twenty laws recorded by Moses for the violation of which they were to be cut off from the promised seed, from the people of God, from his church. When we read the history of the crimes of the Jews after this, we are led to suppose that many must have forfeited their standing in the church, but we will not anticipate. We have now the plain

fact, that those regularly in the church were counted for Israel, and none else, and the laws of the church follow.

When we follow them to the land of Canaan and see them there for four hundred and sixteen years governed by judges of the Lord's appointment, and see how often they transgressed their laws and were punished for their sins, we have some reason to think that many of them were even now cut off, or at least that they incurred the penalty, and that they were still not all Israel which were of Israel.

We at length hear them asking for a king, 1 Sam. 8: 5 and 7: when the Lord said of them to Samuel in answer to his complaint, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them ;" implying it may be the kind of reigning to which the prophets refer, when they speak of Christ reigning on earth over the seed of Abraham in the latter day, so that we may know the kind of rule He will exercise when we have found who are the seed and lawful heirs.

After the days of Solomon, the nation of

Israel divided into two kingdoms or parties: ten tribes followed Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, while the tribe of Judah, and the few that remained of Benjamin, followed Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, the rightful heir of David and of the kingdom. War ensued, and the division became permanent, the one party following the descendants of David their king, and the other Jeroboam and his successors, till the opposers of the sons of David, who, as a nation, had by their idolatry in setting up the golden calves, and refusing to go up to Jerusalem to keep the Passover, and by many other sins incurred the penalty of exscision from the people of God, were carried away captive by the Assyrians and mingled among the Gentiles till they were lost, and as a nation disowned of the Lord, and have not since been found.— See 1 Kings 12, to 2 Kings, 17th chapter, especially the first and last chapters mentioned. So they are not yet all Israel which are of Israel.

This total casting off of the ten tribes of Israel, about 350 years after Saul was made king, was threatened or foretold, 1 Kings, 14 .

15, and seems to have been the legitimate penalty of the laws which they had violated as a nation by setting up idols and departing from the true God, and marks a new era in the history of Israel. The ten tribes, however, claimed the name of Israel, the name of all before.

This is not mere conjecture. They had violated the law, the penalty of which was exscision, and when the Lord took the execution of it in his own hands, we are told, 2 Kings, 17: 15-21, "They rejected his statutes and his covenant, which he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them ; and they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven ;" and v. 18 : "Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight. There was none left but the tribe of Judah only."

This seems plain. All were cast out of the sight of the Lord but the tribe of Judah only. By which name the heirs of promise seem after this to have been generally

known, though the name was now conventional from the name of that tribe, while the exscinded tribes claimed the old name, and to be the true heirs. This act of exscision was not executed until there had been abundant time for all who did not in heart fall in with the idolatry of the nation of Israel to come out from among them and to join themselves with the tribe of Judah. This many of them did as soon as Jeroboam set up his calves.—See 2 Chron. 11: 13, 16. “And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him (Rehoboam) out of all their coasts, and after them out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah.” So that all the tribes of Israel were now represented and included in the tribe of Judah, Benjamin having before been with them. After this falling of a part of all the tribes to Judah, we find that during the good reigns of Asa and Hezekiah, many others of the ten tribes fell to Judah, which

seems to justify the frequent allusion of the Prophets to Israel and Judah and all the tribes after this date, and after the nation of Israel—the ten tribes—were no longer counted as the covenant people of God. But in general, the heirs of Abraham, and of all the rich legacies bequeathed through him, were now called Jews—a mere conventional name—and not Israel.

This view seems confirmed by the fact, that it is now more than 2,500 years since their cutting off, and so effectual has been that casting off of them out of his sight, that they have never since been found, though great efforts have been made in searching the whole earth to see if possible where they were settled. But they have not been found, and no wonder, for, if they are cast out of the sight of the Lord so as to be no longer his covenant people, they will not be seen by the eyes of men. The heirs, then, are now to be found only among those who are amalgamated with the tribe of Judah, and are generally called Jews. But frequently the Prophets still speak of the whole house of Israel and Judah; and James

addresses his epistle in the New Testament to the twelve tribes of Israel; thus, we think, showing that all Israel and Judah that would ever be found, was now among the Jews, and that henceforth we are to look to the Jews alone, in distinction from Israel, for the lawful heirs of Abraham and David. It may be well to add here, that it is not remembered by the writer of these letters, that when the nation of Israel were warned by the Prophets of their destruction by the Assyrians, that they ever intimated that as a nation they would be restored, (as in the case of Judah), but only that remnants would return, such as referred to. The frequent allusion to the whole house of Israel is not thought to be an exception to this, for Judah, with the remnant of the other tribes, now compose the whole house of Israel, both Israel and Judah. The history of Judah I must defer for the present.

This, I think, we may now safely lay down as our future rule of examination till the death of Christ, that all who were regularly in the Jewish church after its complete organization, were counted Israel—the seed

of Abraham and heirs of the promises, and none others. Let us now proceed on this principle.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

L E T T E R V.

DEAR SIR :—If the preceding views are right, then we are henceforth to look to the tribe of Judah, and the remnants amalgamated with them, alone for the lawful heirs of Abraham and David, and the promises made to them. But, are they all heirs? This is the question still before us. Perhaps they are not yet all Israel which are of Israel, for Paul says, “He is not always a Jew which is one outwardly;” and John, “I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews and are not.”

In tracing the history of the tribe of Judah, we find that they also greatly departed from the Lord, and, about 125 years after the casting off of Israel, Judah was overcome, and a part of them led captive, and about eleven years after that, Jerusalem was taken, and their beautiful temple destroyed, and the Jews greatly scattered, “through the

anger of the Lord" for their sins for which he cast them out of his presence, 2 Kings 24: 20,—not out of his sight, as he did Israel. He cast them out of Jerusalem and the temple, the place where he manifested his presence, but not before he had often warned them of this, as the consequence of their sin, preceded and accompanied by many predictive promises that after he had chastised them and the land had enjoyed her violated Sabbaths, at the end of seventy years he would, in answer to their prayers, open the way for their return. And so particular was the Lord in giving them this information for their encouragement, that he caused it to be stated by the historian, 2 Chron. 36: 22, and by Jeremiah several times, even naming the person by whom they were to be set at liberty, while, of the ten tribes carried away by the Assyrians, the Lord said that he would cut them off head and tail, branch and rush, in one day, with no intimation of their return: thus intimating the total and irrevocable destruction of the ten tribes, as a people, while individuals, or remnants, might return to Judah, who were the only

people in covenant with God, and consequently the only heirs to the covenant promises to Abraham and David.

Of the Jews, it was distinctly said, when it was predicted that they would be led captive to Babylon for their sins, that at the end of seventy years they should be brought back, and that Cyrus, though then not yet born, should be the person that would set them free, and that others would aid them in their return. Many other predictions were uttered in reference to that return—the building of the second temple and down to the coming and death of the Saviour, showing the great interest that the Lord had in them as his church, while the others seem to be wholly unnoticed, except those who had returned, and were connected with that tribe. The glory of the second temple, though the house was far inferior, was to be greater than the first, Hag. 2: 9—doubtless because of the presence of the promised Messiah and king, the son of David, taking possession of his own house.

In this division of the tribes of Israel, we see again, as in the family of Abraham,

many more were dropped out of the covenant, or rather exscinded, than were kept in. The bearing of this fact, though somewhat collateral, may hereafter be seen in the progress of this investigation.

Whether you admit all the previous views or not, you will admit that during the period of which we have been speaking, the lawful heirs were to be found in the church as then organized, whether descended wholly from Abraham, or from converts introduced, and intermarried as many had, and not among those who had been cut off for crimes, suffering the penalty of their exscinding laws.

We now advance one step further, and, passing over the last 540 years, including the return spoken of by the prophets between the 70 years and the coming of Christ, we come down to the time of John the Baptist. Here we see a new division, commencing under John, but modified and made permanent under Christ. When John came preaching repentance and baptism, and proclaiming that Christ had come, he did it only to Jews. But all did not believe. The part that believed were called the disciples of John, and

the others Jews, though all were alike Jews. Jew and disciple became therefore again strictly conventional names, and could not at all determine who were the true Jews, if one party only was.

After John had actually introduced Christ as the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, and had taught the people that this was that prophet of whom Moses spake, and of whom many of the prophets had spoken, and who was to descend from David, and was to reign over the seed of Abraham, he set him apart to his work by baptism. Christ immediately began to preach, and to teach the true meaning of their own laws. In doing this, he spake as one having authority, and not as the Scribes. For, as High Priest regularly set apart of God, he had a right to teach. But, besides this, he spake with absolute certainty as to the true meaning of their laws. So that he gave them rules of life under their own laws, and claimed for himself to be their Messiah, who, according to their own Scriptures, was to be their future king, while as yet he was obedient to their laws, and made no new

laws. Still, his explanations of their laws, and the rules of life inculcated under them, seemed to the Jews, when placed beside the teachings of the Scribes and Pharisees, like new laws and new rules.

To these rules and to this teaching the larger part of the Jewish Church, as then constituted, refused to submit, declaring that he was an impostor, while another part of that people owned him as their rightful sovereign, the predicted son of David, who was to reign over them ; and now the division, commenced under John somewhat modified, is renewed : one party, though the smaller, again receive Christ as the Lord and King, the other saying, We will not have this man to reign over us, for we have no king but Cæsar. A war, at least of persecution, soon commenced, so violent that the two parties were permanently separated, as much as under Jeroboam and Rehoboam, or as Jew and Gentile, and have never since reunited, except so far as converts from those under Cæsar have come over to those on the side of Christ ; and, such is the nature of their different views, that no other union can be

formed. Hence they are as effectually divided at this day as they were when Christ was in the world. Keep in mind that this division was not between the Jews and Gentiles, but between the Jews themselves, as much so as that between the ten tribes and Judah, and such a division that the one party only could be the lawful heirs of the promises made to Abraham and David. Which, then, of these two parties were the true successors and lawful heirs? Were those Jews who rejected the Saviour, and said, We have no king but Cæsar, the lawful heirs? or those Jews who believed in and received Christ as the true Messiah, their rightful sovereign, the predicted king of the Jews, the son of David? Which of these parties forfeited their inheritance, as Esau did, by selling his birthright? To this I think the Scriptures give a definite answer; but I must defer it to my next.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

L E T T E R V I.

DEAR SIR :—In my last we followed the history of the Jews down to the time of their permanent division into two parties, under Christ and Cæsar. Here we see the one party denouncing Christ as an impostor, who ought not to live, and joining with the unbelieving Gentiles in reviling and persecuting him, and finally in putting him to death ; the other receiving him as their long promised, long expected Lord and Saviour. We ask here, again, Did those Jews who received him as their promised Saviour, and who carefully followed and obeyed him, though often at great sacrifices, thereby forfeit their character as Jews, and their claim as heirs to the promises made to Abraham and his seed ; and, did the other party, who called him an impostor, and who joined in persecuting and putting to death the Son of God, thereby secure to themselves and their chil-

dren forever all those rich legacies which were yet due by covenant promise to the lawful heirs of Abraham? Can you suppose that the forfeiture fell upon that party, though for the present the smaller, who obeyed the Saviour, and owned him as their promised deliverer? and that the party who rejected him as an impostor, and continued to rebel against him after his resurrection, by that rebellion secured to themselves and their children these rich promised legacies from that very Saviour who had bequeathed these legacies, and who has risen to be the executor of his own will? Would not this be rather a strange conclusion? That such an act of rebellion, against their rightful sovereign, should be followed by such rich blessings, and that the obedience and love of the disciples of Christ, and the thousands of others who, during the preaching of the Apostles, fell to him, and owned him as their Saviour, should be followed by such fearful forfeiture to themselves and their children? At least, this is not the way in which victors commonly reward their friends and enemies, and you can hardly maintain that

Christ will really so reward his friends and enemies ; and yet such was the nature of that division, that you will admit that both parties could not after this be the heirs of all the rich legacies yet due to the lawful heirs of Abraham, for they were even more diverse than Jew and Gentile. Besides, the believing Jews, under the direction of their acknowledged Lord, ceased to circumcise their children, and to keep the Passover, intermarried with believing Gentiles, and became one with them, so that if the present scattered people calling themselves the seed of Abraham, are the heirs, then the others must, in some way, have forfeited their claim, and lost their inheritance. Hence the question is fairly before us, which of these parties are the lawful heirs to the bequests made of the Lord to Abraham and his seed ?

Must you not admit, in the absence of any other testimony, that the probability seems strongly in favor of those who believed in, and followed the son of David, and obeyed him as their lawful sovereign, and against those who said we will not have this man to

reign over us, for we have no king but Cæsar, and who still say the same? For, as yet, both parties were Jews, both were circumcised, both kept the Passover, for no change was made in the Jewish economy or law, till after the death of Christ, so that both parties had equal claims in that respect.

But what seems thus strongly probable, from their position, we think, is made absolutely certain by the teachings of Moses, Christ and the apostles, to which teachings we now turn.

Passing, for the present, over the obscure prediction of Noah, Gen. 9: 27, ‘That the time would come when Japheth should dwell in the tents of Shem,’ and the law of Moses, Deut. 18: 15–19, we will first turn to the teachings of Christ.

When Christ began to teach, he seems to have assumed no more than *princely* authority, for being made under the law, he was as yet a subject of the law, as other men. After being *publicly* pointed out, and set apart by John as their Saviour, he began to teach, and gave them rules to regulate their

conduct under the Jewish law; but, as yet, he repealed no laws. He spake indeed as one having authority, and not as the Scribes, who pretended to be no more than imperfect expounders of their law; but Christ spake as one who knew perfectly the meaning of their laws, and what they were bound to do, as the people of God. His disciples admitted that he had a right so to do, and so do we, and all Christians, because he knew perfectly the meaning of their laws. But if he had a right to give rules to a part of the Jews, had he not to all? And can it be that those Jews who rejected Christ and his expositions of the law and their duty under it, and who are now called Jews, by a sort of common consent, would have lost their character as Jews and heirs of the promises, if they had obeyed him who had a right to rule in that way, when it was their duty to obey him as their prince, who was to be their future king? And if ninety-nine out of one hundred had obeyed him, would the rest have been the only true Israelites, and all the others, because they did just what Christ said was their duty to do, have been

cut off? This can hardly be,—for obedience to Christ never has separated any from the promises of God, while disobedience has always tended to it.

But let us hear what Christ says on this subject; for, during his stay in the world, he often refers to it, though he did not formally set up his kingdom till after his resurrection, when the Jewish law, having been fulfilled, ended, and all distinctions between Jew and Gentile seemed to cease. While in the world, Christ says to his opposers, Mat. 21 : 43, “The kingdom of heaven shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” This seems to be intended as the exposition of the preceding parable, in which he represents himself and his disciples as one party, and his enemies as the other, as the Pharisees seem to admit in verse 45. They perceived that he spake of them.

Again, Luke 19 : 12–27: In the parable of the nobleman who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return, Christ seems to imply that those citizens who hated him, and sent a message

after him, saying, we will not have this man to reign over us, would, after that, be cut off from all the blessings of his reign when the nobleman should return ; for, after the king is represented as having finished calling his servants to account, those who professed to own him king, both good and bad, he adds, ‘ But those, mine enemies, who would not have me to reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.’ Was not this nobleman Christ, and were not the servants professed believers, and were not these citizens those Jews who hated him ? Now if they were to be slain, it does not look like an intimation that they were hereafter to be the exclusive heirs to the legacies bequeathed to Abraham and his seed, when the king should return, but rather that, like Esau, they had forfeited all claim to the character of God’s peculiar people.

This controversy between the two parties continued during the life of Christ, without any absolute separation, for as yet, both parties kept the laws of Moses, as Christ himself did, and taught all others to do it. But the night in which Christ was betray-

ed, and just before that event, He eats the last Passover with his disciples, and then puts an end to that part of the Jewish institution, by establishing the Lord's Supper in its stead, in anticipation of his death, which was soon to take place ; which sacrament was to be kept by his followers, till his second coming. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." He then dies, and by that offering, puts an end to all the bloody sacrifices of the Jewish economy, which were typical of his sufferings. I came not, says Christ, to destroy the law, but to fulfil. After three days he rose again, and returning to his disciples, directed them to go and preach the gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, (where, according to the prophets, Christ was to begin his reign,) and to baptize in his name all who believed, and thus seal them as subjects of his kingdom. And did not Christ here begin his reign over the house of Israel and of Judah ?—not over those who rejected him, and thereby incurred the penalty of exscision, and were no more of Israel—but

over his friends, who were now all that were left after that “diminishing of them” of which Paul speaks, Rom. 11 : 12, of the house of Israel and Judah, though many of the other tribes soon fell to him, as they did from the ten tribes to Judah in the days of Jeroboam ?

But did Christ here begin his personal reign over Israel ?

Let us see how far he changed his course of conduct, after his resurrection, toward his people, and try to determine whether Christ did now actually assume regal authority. During his lifetime he acted as a prince under the laws of Moses, to which laws he was perfectly obedient, but he taught that a “certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return ;” in allusion, it may be, to the customs of subordinate kings, who were heirs to vacant thrones, going to Rome to have their title to the kingdom confirmed. And this nobleman (we suppose) referred to himself returning after his resurrection. But did he after his resurrection assume and exercise regal powers, or any powers which

he did not before? As the answer to this question has an important bearing on some other facts in the history of this interesting people (because as yet the people of God,) as well as on the question before us of inheritance, it may be well to examine it with some care.

Until Christ had eaten the last Passover, he introduced no change in the Jewish worship. He was as carefully obedient to every part of the Mosaic ritual, as any other man, but after that, and just before his death, he instituted the Lord's Supper, and directed his disciples to keep it in remembrance of him and of his death, by which he seems to abolish the Passover.

After his resurrection, when he met his disciples in Galilee, 'where Jesus had appointed them,' Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, "All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth." How different this, from his language when he said, 'Who made me a judge and a divider over you?' Here, he claims absolute power, not in subjection to the powers that be, but over them. "All power is given unto me in heaven and

in earth." And to show that he is not any longer subject to the laws of Moses, but acting as that prophet, whom Moses said, the Lord would raise up like unto Moses, and whom the Jews were to obey at the peril of being destroyed from the people of God, Acts 3 : 22, he virtually repeals the entire Jewish ritual, and says to his disciples, "Go ye therefore" in obedience to my command," and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe"—not the Jewish ceremonial laws, as heretofore required,—but " whatsoever I have commanded you." Before this, when he sent his twelve disciples to go and preach and heal, Mat. 10 : 5, he said, " Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." For then he was under the Mosaic laws, which limited them to the Jews alone, but not so now. He now institutes the gospel dispensation, which was certainly a virtual repeal of the whole Mosaic ritual. So the Scribes and Pharisees understood it, and hence their bitter opposition. No man could after this be

a follower of Christ, and yet be a Jew in the sense of the present Jews. He must lose the one or other character. Christ begins his reign by breaking down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and sending his disciples over the wall to preach to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, commanding all to believe in him, as their promised Saviour and king, and to obey all his commands. He commands them to baptize their disciples, and to keep the Lord's Supper instead of circumcise, and keep the Passover. You are now to regard my word, and not the law of Moses, as the rule of your conduct, and to teach all others to do the same, and I will hereafter send the Holy Spirit to give you such further instructions as you need ; for which, they were to wait at Jerusalem. See Luke 24 : 49. This looks very much like assuming the powers of a king, when he repealed the old laws given by Moses, enacted his own, appointed officers to execute his laws, and carry on his government. These laws were as binding on the Jews as on the Gentiles. They were enacted at Jerusalem. Had not Christ a

right to do so ? and were not the Jews bound to obey them ? Had they all done so, there would have been an end to the Jews, such as now call themselves the only Jews. There would have been none to receive any other promises. But the promises would have remained as now to the seed of Abraham, nor would the seed of Abraham thereby have been destroyed. Did their rebellion then constitute them the exclusive heirs, and did the obedience of those that believe cut them off ?

But if Christ was now a king, he had a kingdom. Over whom then did he reign ? over which party ? the believing part or the unbelieving ? There can surely be but one answer to this. It was over those that obeyed his commands. But over whom was Christ the son of David to reign, according to the prophets ? was it not over the house of Israel and the house of Judah ? Must not, then, the part that believed and obeyed Christ, be the Israel of whom the prophets speak, when they speak of David being king over Israel after the death of Christ ? Does not all this seem to favor the opinion,

that the party who were true believers, were after this to be counted for the seed and heirs of Abraham, and of all the legacies yet due to those heirs, and that those of whom Christ says, John 8 : 44, "Ye are of your father the devil," had lost all claim to the inheritance still due to the seed of Abraham? But more of this in my next.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER VII.

DEAR SIR :—In my last we left Christ giving directions to his disciples in relation to the organization of his kingdom among the Jews. The disciples went on according to the command of Christ, whom they owned as their prophet and king, and taught in what way they could now be admitted as the true Israel of God, or as the subjects of this kingdom—appointed officers in obedience to the teachings of Christ—and received into this kingdom of Christ such as professed to believe him their divinely appointed Saviour and King, and were willing to submit to his rule ; but teaching, as Christ commanded, that those only who were true believers and became Christ's people in heart, were to be regarded as now the subjects of Christ's kingdom, and the future seed of Abraham, according to the promise of God by Jer. 31 : 31–34, ‘Behold the days come, saith the Lord,

that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord ; (but after what days ? Just after Rachel was weeping for her children, and would not be comforted.) I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be *their* God, and *they* shall be my people ; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sins will I remember no more.'

The former covenant was made with them as a nation, the larger part of whom were unbelievers in heart and wicked, and therefore there was need of one saying to

another, know the Lord. But this second new and better covenant, as Paul calls it, and under which, as I think, we shall hereafter see we are now living, was to be so made with Israel and Judah, that every individual was to have the law written in their hearts, or, in other words, that no one could belong to it who was not a true believer and received Christ as their king, and his laws as the rule of their conduct, and hence there would be no need of the subjects of this new covenant saying one to another, know the Lord. For this house of Israel, with whom this covenant was to be made, would all know the Lord. Hence Paul says in his day, under this new covenant, ‘He is not a Jew which is one outwardly—but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart;’ and again, ‘If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.’ Are not these then the subjects of Christ’s kingdom ?

But if Christ be now king in his church, and has actually established his own laws in his kingdom, and his officers to execute

them, and required all Jews to obey them at the peril of death eternal, does it not seem to follow that whatever of laws or ordinances there were or now are among the Jews, such as constitute them a separate people from the rest of the world, and lead to their being called Jews, are in opposition to the king, are self-created in rebellion against him, according to the saying, we will not have this man to reign over us ; and can such a rebellious circumcising and keeping of the Passover constitute them in a scriptural or prophetic sense the covenant people of God more than the Ishmaelites would be, if they should do the same, to the exclusion of those who believed and obeyed their lawful king ? Can circumcising and keeping the law of Moses, in rebellion against the command of God in Christ, constitute them Jews in covenant with God, and heirs of the legacies bequeathed to the seed of Abraham, more than it would any one of us, since the law of Moses admitted Gentile converts to be counted heirs ? Why would a rebellious keeping of the law of Moses, after that law is repealed by Christ,

constitute them heirs more than it would any other Gentile—since both are alike commanded to believe in and obey Christ, and not the laws of Moses ? But if these are not in covenant with God, then they seem to have no claims to the promises made of God to Abraham and his seed, for these were made to God's covenant people, and because of his covenant to them ; but which covenant, the Lord says by Jeremiah, they brake, and hence the new. But if they are not in covenant, then are not those who submit to Christ, (for with them the new covenant seems to be made,) and are they not then the heirs to all the unpaid legacies of the Abrahamic will, to the entire exclusion of those who have broken their covenant with God, as much as the men who of old refused to keep the Passover, while it was yet the command of God to keep it ? Would not a contrary conclusion imply that the prophets taught that rebellion against Christ was necessary to secure to their children the legacies yet due to the seed of Abraham, while Christ denounced them for their unbelief and rebellion, as being not the seed

of Abraham, but of their father the devil, and while John impliedly says, Luke 3 : 8, that God would sooner raise up seed from the very stones than count those who did not 'bring forth fruits meet for repentance ?'

Do you here say that if the believing Jews did forfeit the promise to Abraham, to their seed, still they secured everlasting life, which the unbelieving Jews lost—so that the friends of Christ had still the greater blessing ? If we grant this, would it not array the New Testament and Old Testament promises and threatenings against each other ? On this supposition, would not the Jew have been placed in such a position that go which way he would he must incur one penalty, and secure one promise ? If he followed Christ, he forfeited the promise to Abraham. If he rejected Christ, he forfeited the promise of Christ, and secured that made to Abraham. So that whatever way he went, he incurred one penalty, and secured one promise. Can that be ? Can Christ be thus arrayed against Abraham ? Did the prophets teach so ?

But let us now turn to the teachings of

the apostles, and see whether we can learn more definitely which of these parties they taught were the true Israelites and heirs to the promises made to the seed of Abraham, for they had heard the teachings of Abraham as explained by Christ. Their conduct seems to give the answer, but their more definite teachings we must defer to my next.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER VIII.

DEAR SIR :—Having shown that the Jews under Christ divided into two parties, the one following Christ, and the other rejecting him, and saying, we have no king but Cæsar, and that they (never having reunited) could not both be the seed of Abraham, and heirs of the legacies given to his seed ; and also, that Christ strongly intimated that those who followed him, and not his enemies, would receive these legacies, we now proceed to examine how the apostles who were sent forth to carry out the laws and teachings of Christ understood him. Who did they teach were the heirs ? and who had forfeited their claim to the promises of God to Abraham and David ? They who followed the Son of David as their promised Messiah and lawful king, or those who rejected him ? Both parties, as yet, were circumcised, and for about seven years to

come, both parties were Jews. The party who rejected Christ claimed to be the seed of Abraham; but Christ said, in reply to that claim, John 8: 39-41. 'If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham—ye do the deeds of your father,—v. 44, For ye are of your father the devil.' Paul, in the second chapter of Romans, after proving that circumcision did not now constitute them heirs, since they were living under the new covenant, says, vers. 28, 29, 'For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter.' Paul was here speaking of his own time about twenty-seven years after the death of Christ, and proving that outward circumcision did not then constitute them the seed of Abraham, or properly, Jews, but that a change of heart did, and so claimed for himself and his party to be the true Jews, the lawful seed and heirs of the promises of Abraham, or made to Abraham and David. To this, we think, agree

the words of Paul to the Gal. 3 : 7, "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham ;" and v. 29, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs, according to the promises ;" for, ver. 16, To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. Is it not here plainly declared that those who are Christ's by faith are the seed of Abraham, to whom the promises belong; not only that part of the promise which referred to Christ, but all the legacies yet due to the lawful heirs of Abraham; and does it not imply that the other party who rejected Christ, and who were now as distinct from the disciples of Christ, as were ever Gentiles from Jews, were not heirs? though for seven years both parties were circumcised Jews. Nor does it seem to alter this conclusion at all, that after some of the Jewish branches were broken off from this Jewish tree which still lives, Gentile converts were more numerously grafted in. The tree remained the same, with some changed branches.

Could the apostle have declared in plainer language that circumcision did not consti-

tute a Jew ; that lineal descent from Abraham and circumcision did not constitute an heir of the promises ; but that henceforth, under the gospel dispensation, true believers in Christ are now to be considered the seed of Abraham, and heirs of all the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David, which are still unfulfilled, and so are still due to the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, who are the seed of Abraham. So that if the Prophets speak of the house of Israel and Judah, or of the seed of Abraham, &c., of the present time, do they not speak of those who are in Christ, whom Paul calls the seed of Abraham, and heirs of the promises, in opposition to those who claim to be Jews ?

Again, Rom. 11 : Paul, speaking of the Jewish church under the figure of a tree, says, ver. 17, "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree wert grafted in among them," &c. ; and vers. 23-24, " And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again ; for if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to na-

ture, into the good olive tree, how much more shall these which be the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?" Does not Paul here take it for granted, that the Jewish or Abrahamic tree still lives in that part of the nation that followed Christ, and that the unbelieving Jews were cut off, and no longer had any claim to be the heirs of promise ? And does he not expressly say, that if they ever return, it is to be by being re-engrafted into their own olive tree, which still lives, and is not that tree the part of the Jews who follow Christ, or true believers, whether Jews or Gentiles ? If Paul does not teach that the unbelieving Jews were cut off, we know not how he could have taught it, or how he could have taught that those who were in Christ were the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise, and the Abrahamic tree still lives, though diminished, as in verse 12.

Again, when writing on the same subject to the Galatians, he seems to teach the same truths—Gal. 4 : 21-31. Paul here declares that Isaac and Ishmael allegorically repre-

sent the two covenants : the old, at Mount Sinai, with Moses and Israel, and the new, with Christ and his church or people. That the Sinaic represented the present Jerusalem in bondage ; but the latter the Jerusalem or church which is free ; and then adds, emphatically, ver. 28, “ Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise ; but as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, so it is now : nevertheless, what saith the scripture ? Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free.” So then, brethren, *we* (the believing Jews and engrafted Gentiles) are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free.” Could Paul have given to a Jew a more lucid representation of his total exclusion from all the Abrahamic promises or covenant promises, than by declaring that he stood in the same relation to Abraham that Ishmael did, whom all the Jews, with one voice, declare to have no part nor lot with the promised seed of Abraham ? Or could he have set up a stronger claim for himself

and his companions, the believing Jews, together with the engrafted Gentiles, than by saying, thus emphatically, ‘Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise, when all the Jews admitted that none of the seed of Abraham, excepting Isaac, were included in the promise ? Does it not then follow, that when the prophets speak of the heirs of promise, or the seed of Abraham, or house of Israel and Judah—in reference to the present time, they speak only of true believers, and not at all of those outcast Jews, who have incurred the penalty of excision ? If such declarations as we have referred to, do not prove that those in Christ are the true seed of Abraham, and heirs of the promise, we ask what language could prove it ?—while it seems to show, with equal explicitness, that the present Jews are cut off, and are not the heirs of promise. But of this more in my next. Even at the hazard of appearing somewhat tedious in repeating the same texts, we will try to show they are excinded.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER IX.

JEWS REJECTED.

DEAR SIR :—That the covenant relation of the Jews with God, ended at the death of Christ, and that therefore, no covenant promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and repeated by the prophets belong to them at present, may be farther inferred,

1. From the fact, that the penalty of many of their laws was excision from the Lord's people. See Gen. 17 : 14. ‘ And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his fore-skin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people, he hath broken my covenant’. See again Ex. 12 : 19. ‘ Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses, for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger or born in the land.’ See again Num. 9 : 13. “ But the man that is clean,

and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the Passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from his people.' Ex. 22 : 20. 'He that sacrificeth to any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.' See also, Ex. 30 : 33 and 38 ; 31 : 14 ; Lev. 7 : 20-27 ; 17 : 4, 9, 10, 14 ; and 18 : 1-24. Now most of these laws they had broken, as is proved both by the historians and the prophets of the Old Testament, before the Babylonish captivity—at least great numbers of them had. Such were the charges brought against them, in justification of the Lord's dealing with them, when he suffered them to be subdued and led into captivity by their enemies. And this may account for the fewness of those who were brought back from their captivities, for all those who had by their sin incurred the penalty of excision, could no longer claim that they were of Israel—and therefore, the promise of God by the prophets, to restore all of them who were of Israel was fulfilled, though all that had incurred the penalty of excision were left, when the rest were brought back—according to Amos

9: 8, 9. ‘Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth ; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord. For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve ; yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.’ Now if they were sifted, was it not to separate the chaff from the grain, as was done in their last captivity, the return from which commenced seventy years after they were carried captive, and was completed at or before the resurrection of Christ, when there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven, as recorded Acts 2: 5 ? After which the prophet goes on to say how the house of David is to be built up without the rebels who were cut off. V. 11. In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David which is fallen down. But how is this to be done ? By bringing back those Jews who have incurred the penalty of excision ? Let James answer, Acts 15: 14-17. Referring to this prediction, he says, “Simeon hath declared

how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name,"—not out of the excinded Jews." And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written : After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

In the last revolt of the Jews, when they rejected Christ, denounced him as an imposter unworthy to live, declared they would not have him to reign over them, and put him to death, they seemed to have filled up the measure of their iniquity, and to have fully incurred the penalty of final excision according to the law of Moses. Deut. 18 : 15-19. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thy brethren, like unto me. Unto him shall ye hearken," &c., as explained by Peter, Acts 3 : 22, 3. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren

like unto me : him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you, and it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."

Now if Moses referred to the time of the coming of Christ and to Christ, as that prophet, and Peter also, as probably all admit, then it seems to follow, with almost demonstrative certainty, that all who continued to reject Christ did incur the penalty, and were actually exscinded from the covenant people of God ; the church of Christ which was now organized according to the new covenant foretold by Jeremiah 31 : 31-34, explained by Paul, Heb. 8 : 8-13, and was as yet as essentially Jewish as it ever had been.

At this time all who did not join in the revolt, came out from among them, and put themselves under the rule of Christ, so that the Jews, as such were now, as distinctly divided from the Jewish church of Christ, now called the disciples of Christ, and afterward Christian, as ever the Jews and Gentiles were ; now as those Jews who re-

jected Christ as an impostor, and joined in crucifying him as such, had plainly incurred the penalty of their own law as explained by Peter, an inspired apostle, by refusing to hear and obey Christ, must we not infer that they were cut off from all covenant relations to God, and from all the promises made to Abraham ? If not, then that part of the Jews who did hear and obey that prophet, the admitted son of David, who was to reign over them, must have been cut off. For if the Jews now, so called, are not cut off, then those that obeyed Christ were, for both parties were not and are not now Jews in the same sense, nor do the prophets refer to and speak of both parties, as the Jews and Israel of God. And since the penalty of the law for disobedience was excision, must we not infer that those who disobeyed were cut off, and not those who obeyed, and cut off, so as to have no more claim than the uncircumcised man-child to the promises made to Abraham, &c. ?

2. This excision may be inferred from the fact, admitted by all, that before the death of Christ, the Jews did suffer the

curses of Moses, which were but another name for the penalties for the violation of those laws published and repeated by Moses; at the same time, that the law requiring excision for rejecting Christ was published. Great numbers of them were slain in their wars, and were thus cut off—but many others were carried captive and suffered these curses or penalties, for their sins before the death of Christ, and since the destruction of Jerusalem it has been the common lot of those who rejected Christ.

Now if all the other penalties pronounced by Moses have fallen upon the violators of the law, upon those who would not have Christ to reign over them, and are still called Jews, must not the penalty of final excision from the people of God, which was the specific penalty for not obeying Christ, have fallen upon them also? and not upon those who followed and obeyed Christ. For upon the one or the other the penalty has been executed—for all admit, that both parties are not now the Israel of the promises. Can we then suppose that all the other pe-

nalties have been executed on the rejectors of Christ, and that the penalty which was specifically the penalty for rejecting the Saviour has been executed, not upon the rejectors of Christ, but upon those who followed and obeyed the Saviour, and upon their descendants. This surely would be a strange conclusion, when Peter says, that every soul that will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

3. That the present Jews have forfeited all their covenant blessings, may be inferred again from what John says, Mat. 3 : 9 and 10, " And think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham to our father, for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is cast into the fire," and also from what Christ said would be after his death. Mat. 21 : 33-45. In the last verse of this parable, the Jews admit that he had spoken of them in the preceding part—" They perceived that he spake of them,"—in which he represents the conduct of those who reject

him as so unreasonable and wicked as to justify his declaration, v. 44, “Therefore, I say unto you, the kingdom of heaven shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” Christ does not, like the prophets who predicted their captivity by the Babylonians, foretell that there would be a return of them, or of the kingdom to them, but leaves it as an absolute separation of them from the people of God as enemies, so long as they remained by their obstinate unbelief separate, just as the curses of Moses would follow them evermore.

Now what did Christ mean, if he did not mean that their special favors as Jews would end after they had put him to death? and why, if these favors were ever to return in a special manner to them, did not Christ hold out some encouragement to them that when they repented as a people they would be again restored to their own land, as all the prophets who spake before the captivity did? How can we account for the fact that when he was pronouncing those dreadful woes that

were to overtake that part of the Jews who rejected him when the Romans would invade their land, and destroy their temple, and city, and country—woes such as had never been, and never would be again to the end of the world, that he did not then, or ever after, hold out one ray of comfort by way of pointing them to the time of the end of these woes, and their returning prosperity, when he would bring them back to the land of their fathers, and reign over them in person, if that were his purpose? and if the promises secured *that* to them, to the exclusion of those that obeyed him? He gave abundant directions to those who believed in and obeyed him how they should act and sustain themselves during those trying times, by warning them to flee from the city, and pointing them to his power to save and reward his friends. Why then does he not give one word of comfort to his enemies? Is it here said that there are intimations, Mat. 23 : 37, and Luke 13 : 34, and 21 : 24, that the Jews will again be recalled? We answer that these are only intimations by forced constructions, and that there is not

one word of direct assertion, such as the prophets used, that they will ever be brought back to the land of their fathers, either as the church or as a people to the church. In all ordinary cases the predictions of Christ are more plain than those of the Old Testament prophets. He foretells their captivity and the total destruction of Jerusalem with more distinctness. Why then, we ask again, when Christ was comforting that part of the Jews who obeyed him, did he not give one word of comfort to the others, by naming the time of their returning prosperity? For, bad as they were described to be by the prophet, Eze. 8: 5-18, before the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and certain as their captivlty was in consequence of their sin, yet to encourage them while captives he predicts their certain returning prosperity, 16 : 60-64 ; 20 : 34-40 ; 34 : 13 -16, and especially 37 : 21-25, " And say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land," &c. Why then,

did not Christ, when he had foretold these dreadful woes, then, or ever after, thus plainly point them to the time of their certain return, if that were his purpose ? Let him answer for himself, as he does in the parable of the nobleman, Luke 19 : 12-27, who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return, and he delivered to his servants ten pounds and said occupy till I come, but his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

Was not this nobleman Christ, and were not these citizens the party of the Jews who rejected him ? and what became of them ? After his return and calling his servants to account, he adds, v. 27, " But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me." Could Christ have given a plainer reason why he spake to them of no return to prosperity in the land of their fathers, or a more vivid description of what would be their doom when he came the second time ? Have they not then forfeited all their covenant promises and become Gentiles, as

much as the Edomites, who also descended from Abraham ? Nor will the meaning of the foregoing parable be much altered whether we fix our minds on the return of Christ to his disciples after his resurrection, when he said all power in heaven and earth is given unto me, and on that power set up his kingdom, appointing his own officers to execute his laws, and carry on his government in the midst of Jerusalem, thereby virtually repealing the entire Jewish code of ceremonial laws ; and his subsequently destroying their city and temple as the penalty for their refusing to have him reign over them—after he had called all his friends out of it—or fix our minds on his future coming, at the day of final account.

4. The entire exclusion of the present Jew from all the promises made to Abraham, &c., may be inferred again from what Paul says to the Romans and Galatians, after the death of Christ, and the church or kingdom of Christ was regularly organized according to his own laws, and by the appointment of his own officers out of that part of the Jews who received Christ as

their king, and the others who rejected him wholly separated from them, so that they were no longer one people, obeying one set of laws as when Christ was in the world—but two distinct and separate parties, obeying different laws and as bitterly opposed to each other on the part of the Jews as were Jews and Gentiles.

Rom. 11: 15–25, Paul speaking of the Abrahamic church under the figure of a tree, represents the unbelieving part of the Jews as cut off from the old tree, while the tree still lives, though diminished, verse 12, and is increased by the engrafting of Gentiles. Their exclusion is made perfect by their being cut off for their unbelief as worthless branches from a tree; and verse 23, he shows that if any of them repented and turned to Christ, they were to be engrafted into the old Abrahamic tree, which had all the while been living. They are to be engrafted just as Gentiles, with no more claim to the promises than other Gentiles. Are they not then, at present, cut off just as much as any other Gentiles? Is it said that Paul brings them all back in verse 26? To

this we can only say, for the present, this is far from being plain, and very doubtful as to its true meaning, as we shall hereafter endeavor to show, and does not seem to alter the saying, in verse 23, that they are to be engrafted singly, as other Gentiles, even should they all return under Paul's prediction.

Again, Gal. 4 : 21-31, Paul teaches that Isaac and Ishmael allegorically represent the two covenants ; the old at Mount Sinai, and the new under Christ. That the Sinaio represented the present Jerusalem in bondage, but the latter the Jerusalem which is free, and then adds, emphatically, v. 28—Now we, brethren, (believers) as Isaac was, are the children of the promise. But, as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, so it is now. Nevertheless, what saith the scripture ? Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free, so then brethren, we are not the children of the bond-woman, but of the free. We then repeat again :

Could Paul have given to a Jew a more vivid representation of his total exclusion from all the Abrahamic promises, or from the Abrahamic covenant, than by declaring that they stood where Ishmael did, and had no better claim to the promises than he, whom all the Jews, with one consent, declared had none ?

. And must we not infer from this that when Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel, or any other Old Testament prophet, predict what is to be the future condition of the seed of Abraham, under whatever name, they no more refer to that part which were cut off from the covenant relation, as here represented, than they do to the Ishmaelites, the Edomites, or any others that were cut off? Where can you find the evidence in the Old Testament prophecies, that one part of the excinded seed of Abraham will be brought back more than the others? To the New Testament predictions we shall hereafter refer.

5th. Finally, is not the exclusion of the Jews proved from the fact that for 1800 years they have been excluded from all the privileges of the peculiar people of God ?

When, before the coming of Christ, the Jews were in captivity in Babylon for 70 years only, it seemed long, and prophets were sent of God again and again, to encourage them and to point them to the time of their return, and to assure them that as certain as day and night should continue, so certain should their return be to their own land, after 70 years ; for then the Church of Christ was in captivity with them, and she complained to her Lord, whose eye was upon her, of her sore bondage. But not so now the Church is not in captivity with the present Jews. They only stand as beacons of warning to the Church—but the Church is not there, nor are ministers sent to them to read to them, out of the New Testament, predictions making their return certain.

Millenarians point us to the condition of the Jews, from the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, to the present day, to prove that they are actually suffering the very woes described in the curses of Moses and foretold by the prophets for their sins, and that, therefore, these are the very people of whom Moses and the prophets spake, and

they seem to make out a strong case. But if they are right and if their suffering the very woes which Moses said would follow them evermore, for the violation of their laws, proves that they are the people of whom Moses spake, and that their present sufferings are the very penalties to which Moses referred,—does it not follow with the same certainty that when they have been cut off from the people of God for more than 1800 years, so as to have no more connection with them than the Gentile had with the Jew ; that they are suffering the penalty of excision also, as much as ever the descendants of Esau did, and that they have, therefore, no more claim to the covenant promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, than the uncircumcised man-child ?

Why is the one, more proof that they are suffering the penalty of that law than the other ? And if they are suffering the penalty of excision, then it follows that no promise made to Abraham, and repeated by the prophets, can apply to them, for all these are covenant promises made to the seed of Abraham, while *they* are only known as bearing

the penalties they have incurred, especially that of excision. So that all the promises made to the seed of Abraham must belong, so far as yet unfulfilled, to that part of the Jews and their descendants, who obeyed and served Christ, together with the believing proselytes from the Gentiles, whom we have before proved to be the true seed of Abraham and heirs of the promises made to him—and that therefore the saying of Christ, “Ye are of your father the devil,” and “I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews and are not,” belongs to the present Jews. And ought we not then to beware lest we encourage them in that blasphemy, and thus become partakers of their sin ?

Yours, &c., A. W.

L E T T E R X.

DEAR SIR:—Having seen that the present nation or people called Jews, have forfeited all claim to the character or title of the seed of Abraham, and heirs to the promises made to him and his seed, and that according to Christ and Paul, those who are in Christ are now the seed and heirs of Abraham ; it follows that whatever the prophets have said of bequests yet due to the seed of Abraham, they have said of true believers, whom Paul says, are now Abraham's heirs. It is not perceived how this conclusion can be avoided, if the premises are fairly established.

But suppose, for the sake of trying them by one more test, we admit the contrary, and say, that the prophetic promises or legacies belong to the Jews who have rejected Christ, then those who obeyed him have forfeited them ; and then, if they understood

the prophets, they must have understood them as saying, These great blessings you will secure to yourselves and posterity if you remain in rebellion against Christ for two thousand years or more ; but if you obey Christ, you will lose them. May we not safely say, that whatever the prophets did teach, they did not thus encourage the Jews to reject Christ ? They did not give the blessings promised to the rebels and disinherit the friends of Christ.

But do you ask, Can the prophecies be explained in accordance with these views ? If they cannot, yet if the previous facts be clearly established the result, viz., that the promises, whatever they be, belong to true believers, must also follow, even though some of the predictions of the prophets remain obscure.

Do you say, that though this may be true in reference to prophetic promises, including legacies, yet it does not follow that it is in reference to mere predictions, such as we have of the overthrow of Sodom and Babylon, or even of the coming of Christ ? This is fully admitted. But such admission will

not secure blessings to the rebellious, nor are we certain that God has ever made promises of good to those who are the enemies of God. When promises were made to the Jews, as the seed of Abraham, they were the people of God in distinction from all other *nations*, among whom were none of God's people. But now the people of God are found in the church, while the Jew who denies that Christ has come in the flesh is called an antichrist. Are they not all then the enemies of Christ?

But let us now, keeping the previous established facts in view, approach the prophets, and see how far we can understand them, and whether they certainly teach different things, or whether they accord with the facts before established.

It will be admitted, that all the predictions of the Jewish prophets, relating to the captivity of the Jews, as far down as their captivity by the Chaldeans, when they were to be carried to Babylon, have been fulfilled. If there are any of the Jewish prophets, who speak of the captivity of the Jews, after the death of Christ by the Romans, or by an

other, they should be distinctly marked, we have not found them, and, moreover, are inclined to think they cannot be found. Now if the Jewish prophets did not speak of any captivity of the Jews after Christ, the probability would seem to be, that they spoke of no return from such captivity, unless there is strong evidence to the contrary.

Will it not also be admitted, that when the prophets foretold the captivity of the ten tribes, they did not connect with it any promise of their return from that captivity, as was the common practice when they predicted the captivity of the Jews by the Chaldeans? If they did, the place where they did it should be distinctly marked, as we have not found it.

It will also be admitted, that the prophets did distinctly foretell the return of the tribe of Judah, or, as they were then called, the Jews, and that as parts of the other tribes had returned to them as before shown, that the prophets spake of them as Israel and Judah, and that they often spake of their return while they were in Babylon.

It will also be admitted, that three times

the prophets fixed the time when the return from the captivity should begin—viz. : Jer. 29 : 10. “ For thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place”—51 : 5, 6, when they are directed to flee out of Babylon ; and also Jer. 25 : 11, 12, “ They shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years,” &c.

It will be admitted again, that after the land had enjoyed her seventy years of Sabbaths, that Ezra, under the direction of Cyrus, according to both Jeremiah and Isaiah, did commence this return, as recorded in Ezra 1 : 1, and onward, so as to leave no doubt on the mind of the Jews as to the period of their captivity. With this return the prophets speak of the coming of Christ. See Jer. 23 : 6; 31 : 13; 33 : 15; and Dan. 9 : 24, 25, fixes also the time of that event. Does it not then follow, that when the prophets, after they have marked the time, speak of the return of the Jews from captivity, a captivity which they had often foretold, that we are to understand them as

speaking of that return which they had marked, unless they plainly warn us in what they say, that they refer to another captivity and another return? This would surely be the way in which we would understand other writers when speaking to the same people about the same events. If, then, the prophets have not warned us, that they are speaking of another captivity and another return, the time of which is not defined, ought we not, in fairness, to understand them as referring to that of which they have spoken, and the time of which they have marked?

This seems evidently to be the captivity to which Jeremiah refers, 29: 14, where he says: "And I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord, and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive." That the prophet here refers to their return from Babylon is plain, because it was the language of a letter sent to the captives then

in Babylon, and the time of the return was stated in the same letter, verse 10, that it would be after seventy years were accomplished at Babylon. This is so plain that I believe there is no difference of opinion on the passage.

Soon after this the prophet Jeremiah is sent with another and still more encouraging message to the Jews, occupying the 30th and 33d chapters, in which he was not only to tell them that they should be restored from their captivity, but also that they should remain in their own land until Christ should come, or the Branch. But he does not intimate that he spoke of another captivity and return, except so far as such as Mr. D. N. Lord and others, think they can gather it from obscure hints. Why then should we not understand him as referring to the same return which was to go on till Christ's death? Surely this is the most natural; while, if Mr. Lord's views are right, then these rich legacies are forfeited by the friends of Christ, and secured to his enemies. But did not the prophet speak of the Lord's people, while the present Jews are of their father the Devil?

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER XI.

DEAR SIR :—Before entering upon the inquiry what legacies are yet due to the seed of Abraham, as now found, it may be proper to answer two objections that may arise in your mind a little more distinctly than heretofore.

I. That if the prophets did not teach the return of the present Jews, yet Christ did. If so, he spoke of those who were, according to his own showing, John 8 : 44, the children of their father the devil, and not, as they claimed to be, v. 33, the seed of Abraham, and therefore what he said of them could not be even explanatory of what Moses and the prophets foretold of the seed of Abraham, which seed always included, and still includes, all true believers. The prophets spoke of the friends, and Christ spoke of the enemies of the gospel. But where has Christ taught that those enemies whose cap-

tivity and dispersion he had plainly declared should ever be restored ? Christ says, Luke 21 : 24, ‘ There shall be great distress in the land and wrath among the people, and they shall fall by the sword and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.’ Here their present captivity and sufferings are as plainly foretold as their captivity in Babylon by the prophets of the Old Testament. But there is not a word of what is to be their condition after the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled ; and, therefore, we cannot know from this that Christ does not refer to the end of the world ; and if not, what will be their condition after that time ? So when Christ said to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Mat. 23 : 39, ‘ Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.’ This was said before the separation of the believer from the unbeliever, and while Israel was yet the people of God, and not to those who were after this cut off by the penalty of the Mosaic law, and it cannot, therefore, apply with certainty to those

who were afterward excinded, but seems intended to encourage the believing Jew. But if it did to unbelievers, is there a word about a general return there? While the Old Testament prophets not only declare that their return to their fathers' land was as certain as the return of the sun and the moon, but point out the year when this return is to commence, and the person by whom it is to be effected, Christ, at most, gives us but a doubtful hint. Now how can we account for this fact, if Christ intended that the church should strive and pray for it? The prophets of the Old Testament, from Moses to Malachi, reiterated the return of Israel from the Babylonish captivity, at the end of 70 years and onward to Christ, over and over again, in the plainest terms, to encourage them to pray for it as Daniel did—Dan. 9, and to strive for it when the time came. Why then did not Christ, or any of his apostles, tell us plainly that these excinded Jews would at a future period return in mass, as the church or to the church, and direct His people to strive and pray for it, if that were his purpose? Nothing would have been

easier than for Christ, after he predicted their dispersion, to have told of their return, as the prophets, if that had been his purpose, and of his rule over them in person, but he never did ; and shall we venture to add this to his sayings, and direct the church to strive, and pray for it, when Christ has never plainly directed us to pray or strive for such a result ?

Those who insist that the present Jews will return in mass, or as a nation, ought to give a good reason why Christ did not more plainly reveal it, as the prophets of old did. In general, the New Testament writers are more plain and explicit than the Old. Why not in this, if the Jews as such were to return ? Christ, in the parable of the nobleman, seems to give us the true reason why he said nothing of their return, or our striving to bring them back as a nation or society by themselves. They were to be cut off. ‘But those mine enemies who would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.’

Obj. 2. But if Christ has not predicted the return of Israel plainly, surely Paul has in

the 11th chap. of Romans. If so, it must be in the 11th, 25th & 26th verses : ‘ Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness ? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits), that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved.’ Now, are these predictions of the return of the present Jews ? If so, they are surely very obscure. How different from that of Jeremiah 29 : 10, ‘ For thus saith the Lord, that after 70 years be accomplished, at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you in causing you to return to this place ;’ or Jeremiah 23 : 3, ‘ I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and I will bring them again to their fold ;’ or 24 : 6, ‘ For I will set mine eyes on them for good, and I will bring them again to this land ;’ or Ezekiel 37 : 21—25. Such is the clearness of the predictions of the prophets, relative to the return from the

Babylonish captivity. Now if Paul intended to foretell the return of the present Jews who reject Christ, in mass, as the church or to the church, and thereby to make it the duty of the church to pray for and seek to hasten that event, how can we account for the fact that he did not, as the prophets, tell us plainly that it would be so, and the time when it would be, so that she might know and do her duty when the time came ?

Did the Lord intend that the church should pray for the return of the Jews for ages and generations, and never see the slightest answer to her prayers, or know when she had a right to expect it ? Not so with the return of the Jews from Babylon. But he told them plainly that they should return, and the very year it should commence, and even the person by whom it should be effected, so that they might know how to pray and when to expect an answer. And they did pray, and were heard.—See Daniel 9.

But let us now examine the 11th chapter of Romans a little more carefully, and see if it does clearly, or even obscurely, teach us

that the Jews will ever return in mass as the church or to the church.

The leading object of the apostle in his epistle to the Romans was not to show what would be the future destiny of the Jews, but to show that hereafter both Jews and Gentiles were to be saved by faith in Christ. What he says, therefore, of the future destiny of the Jews is rather incidental than direct, in his attempt to teach both their duty.

In the first ten chapters he addresses himself principally to the Jews, and speaks of the Gentiles in the third person, showing to the Jews that according to their own prophets, when Christ came and fulfilled their law, there would no longer be any distinction kept up between Jew and Gentile, as before. That after this he only would be a Jew which was one inwardly, and that circumcision would be of the heart, in the spirit, Romans 2:29; and that they were not now, nor ever had been, all Israel which were of Israel, and proves by Hosea and Isaiah, that hereafter believing Gentiles would be largely incorporated in the church of Israel, and be

fellow-heirs of the promises to Abraham, while many of the Jews would be cut off, because they rejected Christ, 9 : 24—27, apparently to soften the prejudice of the Jews. He then shows, 10 : 11—13, that henceforth there was to be no difference between Jew and Greek, thus reconciling the Jewish converts to the reception of the Gentiles more largely into their church than before, as their own prophets had taught would be the case when Christ came, and closes the 10th chapter with a quotation from Moses and Isaiah, showing that according to them many Gentiles were to be converted and many Jews were to be cut off. But after quoting Isaiah in a way that might seem to imply that the Jews were to be rejected, and the Gentile church was to be substituted in their place, and to make it plain that they were not, he asks the question, 11: 1, ‘I say then, hath God cast away his people?’ He then turns to the Gentiles, and shows them that God had not cast away his people Israel and substituted them in their place, but only received and incorporated the believing Gentile in the

diminished church of Israel. That they were not the tree, but only branches engrafted into the Abrahamic tree ; that what they had of holiness flowed from the covenant with Abraham, and seems to warn them against the supposition and the danger of supposing that they were now the favorite church and people of God, by the cutting off of all the Jews. Not so; the Jewish church still lived in the believing part of it, and *they* were to be engrafted in it—and that however large the number of Gentile converts, they were still but branches, and not the root.

In examining the question, What does Paul teach in this 11th chapter in reference to the future destiny of Israel, it seems important to determine to whom he refers in the 7th verse, by the term Israel, and by the relatives in verses 11, 12, 14, and 15, which seem to refer to the same people to whom Israel does in the 7th verse. Does he mean the nation of Israel, in distinction from the Gentiles, or the present unbelieving part of Israel in distinction from himself and other believers ? We think he uses it in the former sense, as the prophets did. To this opinion

we are led, first, by the fact that this seems to be the general meaning given to this term by the New Testament writers. The term Israel is used some thirty-five times in the New Testament, and with the exception of its use in this Epistle, if it be an exception, seems always to refer to the nation of Israel in distinction from the Gentiles. On this subject you may satisfy yourself by turning to Mat. 2: 20; 8: 10; 9: 33; 19: 28; Luke 2: 32 and 34; 4: 25 and 27; 7: 9; 22: 30; and John 3: 10. Also, Acts 1: 6; 2: 22; 3: 12; 5: 35; 4: 27; 5: 31; 13: 16, 17, 24; 21: 28; 28: 20. In all these cases we think it will be admitted that the term Israel is used, as in the Old Testament, to distinguish the circumcised Jew, or all Israel, from the Gentiles.

We now come to Paul's use of this term in his Epistle to the Romans, though addressed to the Christians in Rome, both Jews and Gentiles. In this Epistle, we find the term ten times, viz:—chap. 9: 6, 27, and 31; 10: 1, 19, and 21; 11: 2, 7, 25, and 27. Of these, we find that three times he uses it as quotations from the prophets,

viz :—chap. 9 : 27; 10 : 21; 11 : 2. Here he must use it as the prophets did, as distinguishing the whole of Israel who were not cut off by the penalty of their own laws, from all Gentiles who were not incorporated with Israel. Again, in chap. 9 : 31, he uses it in distinction from the Gentiles mentioned in verse 30. The Gentiles had obtained, and Israel had not obtained, the righteousness of God. So in 10 : 19. He certainly does not mean here to intimate that he and the other believing Jews had become Gentiles.

Now if the New Testament writers, including Paul himself, generally used the term Israel to distinguish the circumcised Jew, both believer and unbeliever, from the Gentiles, then Paul would use it here to mean the same, unless he plainly stated that he did not, which he has not done. On the contrary, when he asks the question suggested by the quotation from Isaiah, in the preceding verse, “I say then, hath God cast away his people?” (Israel) he answers, “God forbid, for I also am an Israelite.” So, also, 2 Cor. 11 : 22 : “Are they (the unbelievers) Hebrews? so am I; are they

Israelites ? so am I"—though a baptized believer ; and so were all Jews who believed as much as before. Does not, then, the term Israel, in the 7th verse, include the whole nation who claimed that name, without reference to their character ? Israel hath not (as a whole) attained that which he seeketh for. Individuals who looked for less, had ; but as a nation, they had not. Is not this view confirmed by the term used in verse 12, "if the diminishing of *them*," the Israel of the 7th verse ? Now how were they diminished ? By cutting off the believer from the nation, the Abrahamic tree, or the unbeliever ? The unbeliever, surely. Now the relative "them," in verse 12, seems to refer to the same Israel as in verses 1 and 7 ; and if Israel has been diminished by cutting off the unbelievers, and yet exists, then is it not the nation or only Israel that now exists ? We think you must admit that when Israel was diminished, it was by cutting off the unbelievers. How else is she to be filled up again ? and must not then the relative refer to the nation in distinction from the Gentiles ?

We have been thus particular, because on the meaning of the term Israel in verse 7, and the relatives referring to them, much depends.

Paul had repeatedly proved in this Epistle, from the prophets, that, when Christ came, the Gentiles were to receive the offers of the gospel, and accept them, while the Jews in general would reject them. This he plainly proves from Moses and Isaiah, in chap. 10 : 19—21 : “First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you ;” no doubt alluding to the call of the Gentiles. “But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me ;” referring, as it would seem, to the way in which the Gentiles would receive the truth, and be received of Christ. Verse 21 : “But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people ;” as though they were to be wholly cast off, and the Gentiles to be received in their place ; and so the covenant

with Abraham was to be broken. Hence, to avoid this mistake, addressing himself now to the Gentile converts, he says, verse 1 : “I say then, hath God cast away his people?” Is there an end to Israel, and to the covenant with Abraham, and has the Gentile church now taken its place, into which the believing Jews are now to be merged? To which he answers emphatically, “God forbid; for I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin,” and am a living witness that God hath not cast away his people, nor broken his covenant with Abraham, nor with David, whose house he is building up by the incorporation of Gentile converts, as foretold by the prophets; see Acts 15: 13-16, and as I shall presently show by the figure of a tree. “God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew.” Are you not aware that Elijah once thought that God had cast away all Israel but himself? “But what saith the answer of God to him? I have reserved unto myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal,” and thereby incurred the

penalty of excision from Israel. In these the seed of Abraham, the nation of Israel, was perpetuated then, and so now the seed of Abraham are perpetuated in the elected remnant of verses 5 and 7, who have not incurred the penalty of excision by rejecting Christ; and these were the seed by sovereign choice, as that of Jacob, while Esau was left. But what then? Israel (as a whole) hath not attained that which *he seeketh for*, as all the children of Abraham did not. But the elected remnant had, "and the rest were blinded," as had been foretold by their own prophets.—Verse 8.

Here, for the sake of clearness, we will number Israel and the relatives *they* in the 11th verse, and *them* in the 12th, and Israel in the 25th: all which seem to refer to the same people; also the elected of the 7th verse, the Gentile converts to be engrafted into the Jewish tree, and the returning Jew referred to by the "some of *them*" at the close of the 14th verse, calling the whole nation or army of Israel one thousand, the elected remnant, verses 5 and 7, one hundred, the converts from the Gentiles five thousand,

and the Jews that repented and turned, verse 14, twenty. Keeping these numbers in view as the relative or supposed relative strength of each, let us examine what follows. We have seen that Israel of verse 7 had not obtained that which he expected, more than the eight children of Abraham. But the elected number, who, like the elected Jacob, and who were by the purpose of God, like Jacob, the heirs of promise, had. So that the true Israel of the new covenant continued in them, while the rest, like Esau and the seven children of Abraham, were not counted. This he says was according to what God had foretold, verse 8, and onward to verse 11, where Paul asks again, I "say then have they stumbled [merely] that they should fall," or be diminished from one thousand to one hundred, when the promise of God to Abraham was, that his seed should be greatly increased? To this he answers emphatically, "God forbid. But rather through their fall salvation is come" to five thousand Gentiles, who by believing in Christ have become the seed of Abraham, as the same apostle says, Gal. 3 : 29 : "If

ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise;" and 4 : 28, "Now we, brethren, believers," in distinction from unbelievers, "as Isaac was, are the children of promise ;" so that by this diminution of the original Israel, as a mysterious sequence, five thousand Gentile converts were enrolled in the broken army of Israel, or, as Paul says, verse 17, grafted in among them, and thus made them much more numerous than before, and therefore their fall was not to lessen them from one thousand to one hundred, but to increase them from one thousand to five thousand one hundred. Verse 12. Now if the "diminishing of them" be such a rich blessing to the Gentiles, how much more will this enlargement of them be,—here called their fulness or multitude? Before, as a nation, they were one thousand strong, and now, though nine hundred had been cut off as the penalty for rejecting Christ, see Acts 3 : 23, yet they were five thousand one hundred strong. Before they had one hundred believers to publish the gospel of Christ, and now they had five thousand one hundred. How much more

would this multitude do toward the conversion of the world? Paul here seems to show both that God had not cast off Israel, and how the promise that he would make Abraham the father of many nations, Gen. 17: 4, was to be fulfilled. By this enlargement of the number and glory of Israel from the Gentiles, Paul hoped to lead a few of his Jewish kindred, in whom he felt the deepest interest, to repent and turn. His highest hope was only a few, "some of them," verse 12, and then adds: "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world," or result in sending the gospel through the world, what shall the receiving of them, twenty, or, "some of them," be, but life from the dead, as the return of the prodigal to his father? Verse 16. "For if the root be holy," the first hundred, who are still to be regarded by you Gentiles as the root and stock of the Jewish tree or church, "so are the branches," all of them, whether engrafted from you Gentiles, to whom I am speaking, or from these dead branches of Israel that were cut off from the Abrahamic tree. Verse 17—24: And now while he warns these

newly enrolled recruits in the army of Israel to beware lest they should be elated and stumble and fall as the nine hundred had, he shows more clearly, under the figure of a tree, the process by which they were brought into the church or in covenant with God, not by a substitution of the Gentiles in place of the Jews, and a Gentile church formed, into which the Jewish church was merged, for the Jewish tree still lives in this elected remnant, (as it did in the seven thousand in the days of Elias,) into which the Gentile Christians are engrafted, and are to be, till it shall be much larger than before. Besides, under the new covenant there were to be none but living branches in this tree, which was not so under the old.

Thus far, then, we see nothing like a direct or even implied assertion that more than a very few of the Jews are ever to return to the church.

But after all, does not Paul clearly teach in versès 25 and 26, that hereafter all the present scattered Jews are to be brought back and to be saved ? Let us see: verse 25, he says, " For I would not, brethren, that

you should be ignorant of this mystery (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits)," or too much elated—"That blindness in part has happened to Israel," not a partial blindness to all, but a total blindness to a large part of Israel, as in verse 7, the nine hundred, who for rejecting Christ, were cut off from Israel, according to the prediction of Moses, see Acts 3 : 23 ; and as shown by the figure of the tree, to which figure the term *for*, at the commencement of the verse, seems to refer. But how long is this blindness of a part of the Jews to last ? Paul answers; till the fulness or multitude of the Gentiles be come in. Perhaps Paul means to say, till all the elected Gentiles be converted. That they are to remain in their present scattered state in all nations, to be a beacon of warning to the church before their eyes in every land, till all the Gentiles be come in, as the plates made of the censers of the two hundred and fifty princes who rebelled against Moses, which the Lord required to be laid as a covering on the altar, were to be before the eyes of Israel as a warning ever after. This seems to be the most natural construction of verse 24.

But what then are we to make of the next sentence, “And so all Israel shall be saved?” Does not Paul himself show its meaning, by the quotations which follow? He surely does not mean all that rejected Christ, for millions of them have died in unbelief. Nor is it probable that he means that after the last Gentile is converted, that then at once, all the unbelieving Jews, that part of Israel that were blinded, would be saved, for he generally uses the term “Israel” as embracing all the nation under the old covenant: so he seems to use it in v. 25, a part of whom were blinded and a part not. Does he not then mean, *So, in this way*, and not *after this*, shall all Israel be saved?—*i. e.* *so, as I have shewn you under the figure of the tree*,—by cutting off all the unbelieving branches and engrafting none but believers, and thus enforcing the truth on the mind of the Gentile converts, that they or their children would no more be spared than the unbelieving Jews, if they were not careful to live for God? Under the old covenant, many were truly of Israel, who were not saved. But under the new covenant

with Israel, which, Jer. 31 : 31-4, said the Lord would make with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, and under which Paul says, Hebrews 8 : 1, 6, 8-13, we now live, we are told, as Paul tells us here, that all Israel shall be saved, and under the figure of the tree he shows how it will be done, and *so* in this way, all Israel shall be saved. Paul then brings his proofs ; as it is written, “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant,” &c. Was not this deliverer Christ, who, by the law of Moses, cut off all unbelieving Jews, and by his own, allowed none in but true believers, and so turned away all ungodliness from Jacob ? Indeed, from the very nature of that covenant, as described by Jer. 31 : 31-4, and quoted by Paul, Heb. 8, as now in actual operation, it would seem that no unbeliever could belong to the house of Israel, with which it is made. That we are now living under that covenant which Jeremiah said the Lord would, at a future day, make with Israel and Judah, seems to be made plain by Paul, in his Epistle to the

Hebrews, for he says, 8 : 1, "Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum : We have such an high priest," [not will have] v. 6, "who is the Mediator of a better covenant, [not will be] which was established upon better promises," [not will be] for it had been established by Christ, before he left the world, and then shows the nature of this covenant, by quoting it as foretold by Jeremiah, and wherein those better promises consisted ; and then in chap. 9 : 1, and onward, speaks of the old covenant as past.

Now if these views are correct, then Paul merely shows how, under the new covenant, all who are in this covenant relation will be saved ; and not that the people now calling themselves Jews are ever all to be saved, but rather intimates that they will not.

Does not this view gain a little strength from the declaration of James, Acts 15 : 16, where he says, that the prophecy of Amos was fulfilled, in raising up the house of David by the conversion and reception to the church of Gentile converts ?

Jeremiah had stated, "Thus saith the lord, Behold the days come, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah." And this covenant was to be so formed that all in it would be true believers; and here Paul seems to show us in what way this would be done: under the figure of a tree, from which all the dead branches would be cut off, and none but living ones would be grafted in. And then, v. 26, says, "And so in this way all Israel shall be saved." For this new covenant was to be with Israel, and then brings his proofs from the prophets, showing to both Jew and Gentile, by whom this was to be done, as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob." This Christ did by repealing the old, and establishing the new rules of entering, or of being admitted, to a covenant relation with him. Isaiah says the Redeemer shall come to Zion, while Paul says he shall come out of Zion. Dr. Chalmers thinks that these two inspired men reveal to us a glimpse of the same scene, at a little different, though not

distant periods. Did he not come to Zion when he came into the world, or when he first taught ; and did he not come out of Zion when he had died ? For then it was that he established the rules of admission to covenant relation with God, to which Paul seems to refer. All which was done with Israel, for at that time there were no more Gentiles in the church than had always been. I would not have you understand that I feel very confident of the correctness of this exposition, but only that it seems to me rather more plausible, and more in accordance with the figure of the tree and Paul's proof, than to suppose that he means at some time, no one knows when, for it is not foretold, one class of the excinded children of Abraham will all be converted.

Besides, the fall of Israel was to be the riches or the enriching of the Gentiles ; it was to lead to their extended conversion. Now if, as Paul says, their blindness is to last till the multitudes of the Gentiles be come in, or to the end of the world ; if these cut off Jews are to be, as they heretofore have been, to the end of the world, an evi-

dence of the truth of the sacred scriptures, and a beacon of warning of the fearful consequences of rejecting Christ, may not this be a continued means, in the hands of God, of the conversion of the Gentiles ? I leave the answer with you.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER XII.

DEAR SIR :—At the risk of appearing tedious, and of repeating often the same thing, I will once more call your attention to the prediction of Jeremiah while he was in Jerusalem, and while it was not yet destroyed, but was soon to be. After being told, chap. 30 : 2, to write in a book all the words which the Lord had spoken unto him, relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, their captivity, and their return after seventy years to the land of Canaan, as stated chap. 29 : 10, and assuring them that they would be greatly multiplied and blessed in the coming of Christ, &c., 31 : 15, he adds, 31 : 31—34, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to [or like to] the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the

hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, &c.—But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people ; and they ” (referring again to the house of Israel, with whom this covenant was to be made,) “ shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they ” (the Israel in covenant) “ shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.” Now according to this description of the new covenant, it would seem that every man belonging to Israel in covenant would be a true christian, having the law of God written in his heart. In this consisted the difference, or a part of it, between the old and the new covenant. According to the old, all those who complied with a few of the external conditions of that covenant, though they were not converted men, were Israelites in covenant, and heirs to the land of Canaan, which was one of the legacies bequeathed in

the first covenant, and also to the privileges and blessings of the service of the temple. But in the new none would be admitted but true converts, who had the law written in their hearts.

Now our first inquiry is, when was this new covenant with Israel and Judah to be made, and by what instrumentality was this change to be effected? Has that new covenant been made with Israel and the change been effected, or is it yet future? If that new covenant has been made with Israel and Judah, then according to the meaning of Jeremiah, all who are in it, and so belong to that Israel with which it is made, must know the Lord, must be true converts. To this view my mind inclines.

But let us see what Paul teaches the Jews or Hebrews on this subject. Paul wrote his epistle to them about thirty years after the resurrection of Christ, and consequently after the ceremonial law was ended by its being fulfilled in Christ.

After Paul had clearly established the superiority of the priesthood of Christ over that of the Aaronic priesthood, and said:

chap. 7: 22, "By so much was Jesus made [not will will be made,] the surety of a better covenant," he adds, by way of summing up the former part of his epistle, chap. 8: 1 and 2, "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have [not will have, but we have now,] such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Then, in showing what were the duties of the Aaronic priests under the law or old covenant, he again brings to light the superiority of Christ's priesthood and the necessity of his remove to heaven to serve as High Priest: "For, verse 4, if he were on earth he would not be a priest, seeing there are priests that offer gifts according to the law, or old covenant;" and as Christ was not descended from Levi or Aaron, he could not be a priest under that covenant, for according to the law or old covenant all priests must descend from the tribe of Levi. Paul then goes on to say, verse 6: "But now hath he obtained a more excellent

ministry or priesthood—[not will obtain.] By how much also he is [not will be,] the mediator of a better covenant which was established upon better promises” (not will be); verse 7, “For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.” But is not this second and better covenant, of which Christ is now the priest or mediator, the very same new covenant which Jeremiah said six hundred years before was at a future day to be made with the house of Israel and Judah.” Let Paul give the answer. In proving to the Jews the correctness of his position according to their own prophets, he quotes Jeremiah: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house Judah. If the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second,” of which Christ was mediator. “For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, when I will make a new covenant with Israel and Judah.” Paul then repeats the covenant from Jeremiah, and says of this new or

second covenant, of which Christ is now mediator, that it is so formed that the heirs of this new covenant or testament shall not say one to another, as under the old, know the Lord—for all in it shall know the Lord, having the law written in their hearts. Thus Paul proves to the Jews that what he had said in reference to Christ being the mediator of the second covenant, was but what Jeremiah said would be when Christ came. Now if this be so, then the new covenant which Jeremiah said would at a future day be made, has been made with Israel and Judah, and the change effected by the law of Christ, and we are living under its benign influence. So that under this new covenant those who are true believers are accounted Israelites; hence Paul says to the Galatians, 3 : 29, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise;” certainly implying, as Paul proves in the 4th chap. of Gal., that if they are not Christ’s then they are not Abraham’s seed, and not heirs.

Then to make this still more plain, that the second covenant to which Jeremiah refers,

and which was to be made with Israel, when all Israel should know the Lord, was none other than the covenant of grace of which Christ was mediator, he adds, verse 13, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old"—so that it would vanish away. But has it passed away? Paul says again, Heb. 9; 1: "Then verily the first covenant had also [not has, for it was now done away; but it had also] ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary." And, describing again the service in the first tabernacle and covenant, and showing its inferiority, he says, verse 8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing," &c.; which service, he says, verse 10, was "imposed on them until the time of reformation," during the continuance of the old covenant, the end of which, Paul says, had come when Christ died; for he adds, verse 11: "But Christ being come, an high priest of good things to come,—12, by his own blood entered in once into the

holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us—verse 15, and for this cause he is [not will be] the mediator of the new testament,” (new covenant, or will.) But this new covenant, of which Christ was mediator, and which, as Paul proved, was that predicted by Jeremiah, though included in the covenant with Abraham, was not in force till after the death of Christ, as Paul shows, verses 16 and 17: “For where a testament [or will] is, there must also, of necessity, be the death of the testator, for a testament is of force after men are dead ; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth—verse 18, whereupon neither the first [covenant] testament was dedicated without blood ;” though that blood, as the covenant itself was, was only typical, for the testator or priest did not then die ; so that, though this new testament or will was made with Abraham and his seed, it did not go in force till the death of Christ the testator, and therefore it is called a new covenant or testament. Paul then carries on the parallel, till, chapter 10 : 9, he shows how Christ had taken away the first cove-

nant or testament. "He taketh away the first that he might establish the second," and then shows again, verses 15 and 16, that this covenant or testament bequeathed and secured salvation to all the heirs. But this covenant—this new testament—was to be made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, the only church or covenant people which God has ever had since the covenant with Abraham and his seed. Now since the house of Israel and Judah composed all Israel, and all in this covenant were to have the law written in their hearts, all were to be saved; and Paul having proved to the Jews, that of this new covenant Christ was after his death the mediator, may we not learn what this same apostle means, when, after describing to the Romans the operation of this new covenant with Israel under the figure of a tree, with dead branches cut off and living ones grafted in, he says: "And so [in this way] all Israel shall be saved," and follows it with a quotation from Isaiah and Jeremiah, to prove the same great truth, viz., that all in this covenant which was made with Israel,

should be saved ; that the covenant of grace, or second covenant, of which Christ was mediator, would be just as much with Israel as the first ; that the church was one, as described in the figure of the tree ; that the only great change would be, that while the first had many unbelievers and but few Gentile converts in it, the latter and better would have no unbelievers, but great numbers of Gentile converts, and all unbelieving Jews would be cut off, or, in the language of Peter, be destroyed from among the people of God.

Now if these views are correct, does it not follow that the present people calling themselves Jews are not now in covenant, and that Jeremiah has not foretold any future covenant to be made with them, but only that which has been made ?

Does it not also follow, that all which Paul says—Rom. 11—is but showing how the covenant with Abraham and David is continued with their seed, and how all Israel, under the new covenant, will be saved, and how Christ has put an end to the old covenant after his death, by repeal-

ing all the laws of the first covenant and establishing his own, and by changing the sacraments to correspond with the new and better covenant, under which all are to have the law written in their hearts? And then would the present Jew, who in violation of that repeal continues to circumcise his child thereby, make him a Jew any more than an Ishmaelite is a Jew, or a Gentile would be if he should circumcise himself or his child, or both?

But what then are we to understand by the teachings of vs. 28-31? We answer, that whatever difficulty there may be in understanding them, it should not lead us to reject what seems plain. But is there, after all, any more difficulty in understanding these verses according to the foregoing views, than if we adopt the more common interpretation of vs. 25 and 6? Keep in mind, if we are right, that Paul constantly uses the term "Israel," as in common use, for the descendants of Abraham, as in the old covenant. Then in v. 28, he says, "They," the Israel of the old covenant, in large numbers, "are enemies for your

sakes." They are enemies for the benefit of the Gentiles, as shown in vs. 11 and 12. Through their fall and diminution, salvation is come to the Gentiles. Their enmity led, in the mysterious providence of God, to the preaching of the gospel to you. But the other part, the election or elected remnant of v. 5, are beloved for the fathers' sake, for through the covenant with them, they are the seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. He then adds, As ye Gentiles in time past did not believe, but now have been led to believe through their fall, as stated v. 11, so by the purpose of God, these have now been left to reject Christ, as in v. 25, "That through your mercy, they also may obtain mercy,"—they also may have the gospel preached to them. For if the preaching of the gospel by them to the Gentiles was a mercy, and led to the saving of some of the Gentiles, so hereafter the preaching of the gospel to the Jews by the Gentiles would be a mercy, and save a few of them.

But why then are they so long kept in a separate state, if not that they may be gathered again?

We may not be able to tell more than why they were first called. But still, may it not be for a warning to all nations where the Bible is read, and these Jews seen in their present deplorable state ; of the danger of rejecting Christ as they did, and thus by their fall, salvation still come to the Gentiles ?

Was it not thus used by Paul in this chapter, showing the Gentile converts, that if God spared not the natural branches which lay cut off, before their, and our eyes, take heed lest he also spare not thee ? Now if this be one object ; if their fall is thus to continue to contribute to the salvation of the Gentiles, may we not expect, that their present blindness and dispersion will last till the last Gentile convert is brought in, or as Paul says, v. 25, the fulness of the Gentiles be come in ? That they will always stand before the eyes of the world as a proof of the consequence of the sin of rejecting Christ, just as the plates on the covering of the tabernacle did of the sin of Corah and his company in rebelling against God. These were placed before

God, in distinction from all others ; and this, St. Paul says, Rom. 3 : 2, was their chief advantage. From them the Saviour descended, through whom Abraham was to be a father to many nations, and through whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed in Abraham and his seed. All these legacies, we think, have been paid, because they were promised to God's covenant people, and because they have in fact had them, and because none of these seem to be included in the special blessings of the new covenant, as stated by Jer. 31 : 31, to be made at a period then future, and under which we now seem to live, as before shown.

But to this you will perhaps reply, that there are many promises made to Israel by the prophets relating to their return from captivity and their future prosperity, which have not yet had their fulfilment, and must therefore still be due to them, to be paid hereafter.

This objection can only be met by an appeal to the prophecies, and to the history of Israel. But as these letters are merely in-

tended as an introduction to the study of these prophecies, all that will here be attempted will be to refer to a few prophetic promises, which seem to be most full and to be most relied upon, to prove the future return of the present scattered Jews to Jerusalem. Such as found Lev. 26, Deut. 30, Isaiah 2, 11, 12, Jer. 29, 31, 32, and 33d chapters, and Ezekiel 16, 20, 34, 36, and 37th chapters.

And a very slight examination of these predictions, so as to show on what principle they are supposed to be fulfilled, is all that is proposed.

But first I would remark, that if we have been successful in proving that the only seed of Abraham and heirs of the promises are at present true believers, then they are not in captivity, and so cannot now come out of it.

But are the above prophetic promises fulfilled? Let us see.

The first promised return is found Lev. 26: 40—46. In 44, "I will not cast them away, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them." A few of

the covenant people were to return, as they did from Babylon, &c., after the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. But on what condition was that return? In verses 14 and 15 we are told distinctly that they would go captive if they would not obey the ceremonial law, and verse 40, if they would confess their iniquities, &c. Was not their sin the violation of the ceremonial law? and must we not suppose, then, that this return was to be before the ceremonial law was fulfilled and abolished by the death of Christ? Does not the reference to the fact, verses 34, 35 and 43, that then the land would enjoy her Sabbaths, her rest, "Because it did not rest in your Sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it," strengthen the foregoing view? The sabbatical years which were violated were probably not more than seventy; at most they could not have been more than double that number before the captivity in Babylon, if they had kept none. Surely then the Jews are not now keeping those violated Sabbaths, nor the land either, for they have long since been all kept.

The next return spoken of to which I

would call your attention, is found in Deut. 30, where we have an extended account of their return from those fearful woes pronounced against them by Moses, chapters 28 and 29. But what is the condition on which they were to be brought back from all the nations whither the Lord had scattered them ? In chapter 28 : 15 we are told that if they did not keep the law repeated by Moses that day, (the ceremonial,) that then these curses would come upon them ; and then we are told, chapter 30 : 1, 2, and 10 verses, that the condition of their return was that they should return to their obedience of the same ceremonial law : " And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse," first their prosperity, and then their adversity, " which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, thou, and thy children, with all thy heart and with

all thy soul, then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and gather thee," &c. Now, since both the threatening and the promise depended on disobedience and obedience to the same ceremonial law, must it not refer to a period prior to the death of Christ, while that law was in force, after which Christ solemnly commanded all Jews to believe on him, and be baptized—not circumcised—on pain of death? And if that return is yet future, must not the condition be obedience to the ceremonial law, or, in other words, rebellion against Christ? But surely you will not say that rebellion against Christ is the condition. Must not then that return have been fulfilled? Would it not now be sin in a converted Jew to offer sacrifices as much as for any other person, and is it not so for the unconverted?

Before entering on an examination of the predictions of the prophets in Canaan, it may be well to remember, that those who were sent to them before their captivity were sent as ministers now to urge them to obey the Lord, by pointing them to the woeful consequence of disobedience, and on

the other hand to the rich promises yet to be fulfilled to them if they obeyed, including the certainty that they would disobey and suffer, repent and be brought back.

Those who were sent just about the time of the first siege of Jerusalem, and after they were in captivity, seem to have been sent to encourage the believing Jews, by assuring them that doleful and hopeless as their present condition appeared, they should assuredly be brought back, and be greatly prospered and blessed, after they had been seventy years in captivity, and that the promised Saviour would yet assuredly descend from them, and be a rich blessing to all nations, as promised to Abraham.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER XIV.

DEAR SIR :—Let us now turn to the 2d, 11th, and 12th chapters of Isaiah, uttered more than 100 years before the Babylonish captivity ; and here I will only ask, does not this description of the church somewhat resemble the description which Paul gives of the church in his day, formed of believers, Heb. 12 : 22—24 : “But ye are come to Mount Zion,” &c., to the end of the chapter ? But as no commentator has succeeded in making that chapter very plain, I will not attempt it. And may not the return spoken of 11 : 11 & 12 refer to that return that seems to have taken place while Christ was upon earth, and spoken of Acts 2 : 5, by Peter, when he says, just after the death of Christ : “And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.” Had they not returned to see their long-promised Saviour ? It was surely

natural for devout Jews who were expecting the Saviour to come and reign over them and cause them to prosper, when they heard that he had actually come to return to Jerusalem, as they certainly had, or they would not have been dwelling there; and did not Micah say, 5: 3, that it would be so after Christ was born? And is it not even possible that the highly figurative language of verses 14—16 may intimate the manner in which the way was to be opened by the powers of Rome for their return at that time? I would not say that it is so, but only ask, may not this return of verses 11 and 12 have been completed at the death of Christ, since the prophet refers it to the time when Christ was on earth? May not then this whole passage refer to the commencement and future prosperity of the Christian Church? The return mentioned by Peter from all nations on earth was as extensive as the promise by Isaiah.

Let us now pass to the examination of a few of the predictions of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which Millenarians think certainly promise more than has yet been received by the Jews. But—

1. First, we remark that we have found no prediction intimating that the ten tribes would be recalled from captivity, except those that returned and united themselves with the tribe of Judah. Amos seems to have predicted their captivity, 6 : 7, and perhaps 8 : 14, where he says : "They shall fall, and never rise up again." But he says not one word about any return. Isaiah plainly foretold the destruction of the ten tribes, now called Israel, by the Syrians and Philistians, 8 : 8—17, but it was followed by no promise that they would, as a separate people, ever be brought back again. This prediction was uttered a few years before the date of the event, as recorded 2 Kings, 17 : 1—18. They had, by setting up idols, &c., as a nation, incurred the penalty of excision from God's covenant people. After this they seem only known as connected with Judah, to which tribe remnants resort-ed, as recorded 2d Chronicles, 11 : 16, just after Jeroboam set up the golden calves, and 15 : 8, 10, under the good reign of Asa, and 31, under the reign of Hezekiah ; so that, probably, all the tribes were represented in

the tribe of Judah, as implied when James addressed his epistle to the twelve tribes of Israel.

2d. Our next general remark is, that all that was said about the Jews going into captivity after this seems to have referred to, and to have been fulfilled, when they were carried captive to Babylon; no prophet seems to have spoken of any later captivity, so far as we have found. The following seem all to refer to that captivity, or to something before—namely, Isaiah 3 : 1—26 ; 22 : 18, 20, 25 ; 39 : 5—7. Jeremiah 6 : 22—25 ; 10 : 17, 18 ; 15 : 1—8 ; 16 : 1—13 ; 19 : 6—15 ; 21 : 3—6 ; 25 : 9—11 ; 26 : 6 ; 27 : 22 ; 32 : 26—29 ; 34 : 1—3 ; 41 : 2 ; 52 : 1—34. Ezekiel 7 : 2—9 ; 12 : 1—28 ; 14 : 12—23 ; 16 : 35—43 ; 21 : 25—27. Micah 3 : 12. These may not include all, but they are the most full; and they seem all to have been fulfilled when the Jews went to Babylon as captives. If that be so, is it probable that these prophets ever predicted a return from a captivity of which they nor the Jews had never heard?

3d. We remark thirdly, that these pro-

phets seem to have been sent to encourage the pious Jews, by assuring them, that deplorable as their present condition was, yet after seventy years they would again be brought back to their own land. This period had been definitely fixed by Jeremiah; and as no other time had been spoken of by any other prophet, must not all the Jews have understood them as referring to that time when Jeremiah or Ezekiel, who were with them in their captivity, spoke of their certain return to the land of Canaan? Besides, this same deliverance and return after seventy years, when Babylon was to be taken, was referred to, Isaiah 13: 16—19, compared with 14: 1—4; 44; 27—45: 1; and by Jeremiah 51: 5, 6, 11, 28; and 2d Chronicles 36: 22, &c.

In the 31st chap. of Jeremiah, 10th verse, we are told: "He that scattered Israel will gather them;" and then, v. 22—26, and 35—40, we have an account of that gathering. Now have these predictions been fulfilled to the extent here described? We reply, first, that the description in verses 35—37 seems exactly to fall in with that of the new cove-

nant described verses 31—34. Again, the return described in verses 22—30 does not seem to be a more extensive return than that which the prophet had said in his letter to those already in captivity in Babylon, ch. 29; 10—14, would positively take place after seventy years. Now if the one has been fulfilled, as it must have been, may not the other, since they were soon to be together in captivity in Babylon, and were to return together?

Besides, all this was to be done for the house of Israel and the house of Judah, which were then to go into captivity, including the whole church of Christ. But if this return be yet future, then these blessings are either promised to a people whom Christ calls the children of the Devil, or to the church, which is not in captivity.

But is it said that all did not return, and, therefore, another return must be included? We answer, that the proclamation of Cyrus freed all from bondage, and allowed them to return, and that the promise of the Lord secured the return only of those who had not incurred the penalty of excision, which was

probably but a small number, and that the return might extend till the death of Christ (as they were never again to go into captivity), when they had actually returned from all nations—see Acts 2: 5.

If we turn to chapter 32: 36—44, the same remarks in substance apply. Just after reiterating that the city would assuredly be taken and burned, and they be led captive to Babylon, and all hope seemed to fail to encourage the few believing Jews, he repeated the same encouraging promise almost in the words of his letter to the captives, 29: 14, which return he had assured them was to be after seventy years, and no other return is alluded to. Is it not then past? If not, why no allusion to a future captivity and return?

Turn now to chap. 33, when the prophet had a second message while he was yet in prison. He again repeats, v. 5, the certainty of their being taken captives, and then v. 6, and onward, of their return and prosperity; but alludes to no other time than that which he had mentioned after 70 years, which time the Lord had fixed. But

none of the prophets tell us that the return was to be complete before the death of Christ. From v. 15-18, the prophet, to comfort them still farther, under the dreadful calamities which they were enduring and were to endure for a long time to come, adds, "But in those days," while they enjoyed the blessings of that return, the Lord would cause the "Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David," or in other words, that they should remain in their own land, till Christ should come of the seed of David, who was in a special manner promised as the richest legacy of the Abrahamic will, the richest bequest made to the seed of Abraham, and which was to be given them in their own land. That legacy they have received. Have they not all the rest they were to have in Canaan, or must they lose that by rejecting Christ to secure others?

Then, as if aware that he had promised blessings almost beyond the power of their belief, when they were soon all to be captives in Babylon, the Lord directs the prophet to assure them, v. 20 and onward, that all this is as certain as the return of

day and night, and that, too, while the priests and Levites held their places under the Mosaic law. If more is included in the last message, from v. 23-26, does it not belong to the Israel of the new covenant described by Paul ? So that all that was promised to Israel in Canaan may be fulfilled.

In confirmation of the foregoing views, let it be remembered that we are repeatedly reminded, that so great would be the destruction of life of those that were in Jerusalem, and in Judea under Zedekiah, that comparatively only a few would escape. See Jer. 29 : 15-19, and 44 : 25-30 ; and then, when we remember that very many of those who escaped the sword, had probably incurred the penalty of excision, is it any wonder that the promise was fulfilled by the return of a few ; and are we not warranted in supposing that the prosperity to which the prophet so often referred, and which was to follow that return, had reference to the time when, hundreds of years after, they again increased to a great and powerful nation, just as the promises to Abraham

and his seed referred to a period long after he was dead? And then there seems no special difficulty in supposing that all the bequests made to the seed of Abraham, in the land of Canaan, as foretold by Jeremiah, have been received by them, and that what remains is that which is promised in the new covenant, and to those that are included in that covenant.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER XV.

DEAR SIR :—Let us now look at a few of the predictions of Ezekiel, and see whether he brings back the Jews before or after the death of Christ. Whether according to him, their return is complete, or is yet in part certainly future. As he began to prophesy after the Lord had fixed the time of their return from Babylon by Jeremiah, there was no need of his repeating that ; for surely so long as he spake of no future captivity, and no other time of their return than that fixed by Jeremiah, and spake to the same people of the return from Babylon, all would understand him as referring to the same time, as much as different ministers are now understood to refer to the same time, when they speak of the judgment day.

We find one prediction of their return 16 : 60–63. But here is no intimation that it will be after the death of Christ, or beyond

the time specified by Jeremiah, except that the Gentiles will be received as fellow-heirs, "but not by their covenant." Then was it not by the new covenant of grace ? Jer. 31 : 31.

The next we notice is 20 : 33-41. Here seems no intimation that it was to be more distant than the time specified. But there is a strong intimation, v. 38 and 9, that the excinded Jews should not return. "I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me, and I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel." Now here it seems the house of Israel is to be purged of the excinded Jews ; and yet in v. 40, immediately following this, the prophet says that all the house of Israel, all of them, are to return and serve the Lord in the mountains of Israel. Does not then, the *all* mean, at most, only those who were not excinded, and not all who were carried captive ? And who can determine that these were not all brought back before the death of Christ ?

In ch. 34 : 11-16, we have another pre-

diction that the captives should be brought back from all the countries to which they had been scattered. But the Lord adds, "I will destroy the fat and the strong." All the captives, then, are not to return, but the heirs not cut off. V. 23, he adds, that he will set one shepherd over them, a descendant of David. After their return they had only one ruler over them, one shepherd. If this refers to Christ, may it not be to the time he was in the flesh, and was subject to the laws of Moses, and before he was king ? For during his sojourn on earth, he seems only to act as prince subject to the existing laws, and not till after his resurrection did he enact laws, for his kingdom, and appoint his own officers to execute his laws ; so that there seems no certainty that all here predicted is not fulfilled.

In ch. 36: 1-15, we have the prophet addressing the hills of Judea, saying that they would be very fruitful, and that the Lord would multiply men upon them, even all the house of Israel—all not excinded ; and was not that promise fulfilled before Christ, especially during the time of the

Maccabees? V. 21-38, we have another repetition of the promise of a general return. But in v. 37, he says, "I will yet for all this be inquired of by the house of Israel." Showing that all this was to be done while the people of God, the praying people, were among the Jews, and in captivity, and before they were separated by the introduction and operation of the new covenant. Has it not then been fulfilled?

In the 37th chapter of Ezekiel, we have another prediction of the return of the captives, which includes things which Millenarians think have certainly not been fulfilled, and must therefore refer to some future return. But is this certainly so?

Let us, in examining this chapter, try to place ourselves in the midst of the weeping captives in Babylon, the praying people of God, not two years after the destruction of their temple, and while they felt all the bitterness of that captivity, and of the loss of the greater part of their friends by the sword, and try to listen to them saying to their, prophets, What is to become of us? Where are now all the Lord's promises to

our fathers to bless them, and to make them a blessing to all the world through that Saviour who had not yet come to rule over them? And Jeremiah and Ezekiel are sent with messages of comfort to them that still believed in God. The vision of Ezekiel is that which is now before us.

Standing in Babylon, where Ezekiel stood, let us listen to the new vision of the prophet, prophesying to the dry bones, 1-14, until there stood up an exceeding great army. V. 11, he says, "These bones are the whole house of Israel;" those not excinded from the church of Israel, by having incurred that penalty. In reply to their unbelieving complaint, v. 11, saying, "Our bones are dried, our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts," the prophet is directed to say, v. 12, "Thus saith the Lord God, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall

live, and I shall place you in your own land. Then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." Now as the time when this return was to commence had a few years before been definitely fixed by Jeremiah, a colleague prophet, and was no doubt very often spoken of by the captives one to another, must not every Jew understand him as referring to that time, unless he referred to another, which he did not as yet, and he surely did not intend to deceive the Jews ? Was not all this fulfilled when, about fifty years after this, the proclamation of Cyrus, as recorded in the first chapter of Ezra, was issued ? But can the next message be so explained as to agree with this ? Let us see : v. 15, "The word of the Lord came again unto me." It was a separate message. He had before assured them of their certain return to their own land, and now he is sent to teach them, that other and still richer blessings were still in store for them, deplorable as their condition now appeared. And first, by taking two sticks and joining them into one, he is to teach them that when they

should come out of captivity, all the remnants would be joined in one nation, and one king should rule over them, and they should never again be two nations, destroying one another, as they had done before ; neither should they defile themselves any more with idols : "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Now does not the proclamation of Cyrus, and the return commenced under Ezra, and the history of the Jews from that time, to the death of Christ, give us reason to believe that this prediction has been fulfilled ? They were liberated by Cyrus, they commenced their return under Ezra, they were organized in one government, and were never more divided, they rebuilt their temple, grew into a great and powerful nation, continued in Canaan to the time of Christ, were never after this idolaters, as before, and Christ did descend from David. But let us not forget that the return and prosperity here spoken of, as if it were all in one year, covered a space of more than five hundred years, as in the promise to Abraham. So that there was time for the ful-

filment of all, and all seems to have been fulfilled by the same slow process that the promise to give Abraham the land of Canaan was.

The prophet now proceeds, v. 24, ‘ And David my servant [Christ] shall be king over them.’ But as yet he does not say when or in what part of their history after their return he would be king, but only that he would be king. The prophet continues and says, “ And they shall have one shepherd ; they also shall walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children’s children for ever ; and my servant David shall be their prince for ever—and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever,” &c. How long then was this covenant called everlasting to continue, or to what period do the terms for ever and evermore, so often repeated in this passage, refer ? If this can be determined, then we can determine whether this prediction has

been fulfilled. If we can determine to what time forever refers, in any one of these expressions, then it is probable we have a key by which we may determine all, for they all seem to refer to the same period. They shall dwell in the land *for ever*, and David shall be my prince *for ever*. I will make an *everlasting* covenant with them, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them *for evermore*. Doubtless all these terms refer to the same period. Can we then determine any one of them? We are told in v. 24, that David was to be king over them, but in v. 25, we are told, my servant David shall be their prince *for ever*. The same prophet says, Ezekiel 34: 24, "I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them." Now, if the prophet meant to make the ordinary distinction between king and prince, as he seems to do, by calling him king in one connexion and prince in another, then the time referred to by the term for ever, connected with his princely character—in v. 25 must terminate with his death, for it was only during his lifetime on earth that, as a prince, he was subject to

the laws of the kingdom. While he was in this world, in a bodily form, though a great prince, being born heir to a great kingdom, he made no laws, but only explained and obeyed them. Being made under the law, he had no right to make or break laws, and his obedience was perfect to the laws of Moses. But as soon as he rose from the dead, having received the kingdom to which he was heir, he said, ‘ All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Stop no longer at the limits required by the laws of Moses, but go to all nations and baptize instead of circumcise. Thus virtually sending his disciples to proclaim him king of his church or people, the house of Israel, by publishing his laws, and requiring all men, Jews as well as Gentiles, at the peril of death eternal, to obey them, though in doing so they must transgress the laws of Moses, which he thereby shows he has abrogated, for his kingdom is in Judea over the same people. He is now king, as the prophet said, v. 24, he would be in

the mountains of Israel, over the returned captives ; so that henceforth the subjects of his kingdom are to obey his laws, and he appoints his own officers to execute his laws ; the priests as such have no longer any thing to do in his kingdom, nor the Levite either.

Now if, when the prophet said, “ My servant David shall be their prince forever,” he plainly meant, to the end of the Jewish dispensation, then does he not refer to the same time when he says, just before, that the returned captives should dwell in the land in which their fathers dwelt, forever ? And, in verse 26, that he would set his sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore ? They surely seem all to refer to the same time ; and if so, then all must have been fulfilled when Christ died, which seems to render the whole passage comparatively plain.

After this, the Jewish law having its fulfilment in the sacrifice of Christ, Christ says, “ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,” and once and forever abolishes the Jewish laws and preferences, by the establishment of his own laws, over his people, the same among all nations. After

giving the necessary directions to his disciples, he ascended from the earthly to the heavenly Jerusalem; from the earthly to the heavenly Canaan, to sit at the right hand of his Father, that he might be alike accessible to all his subjects in this world. He then sent the Holy Spirit to guide them in completing the arrangement of his laws and officers in his kingdom, and there he will rule as the son of David forever.

Now if these views are at all admissible, then may not all the predictions of the return of the Jews have been accomplished when Christ died, or, in other words, have not all the legacies of the Abrahamic will been paid, so far as they were to be paid in Canaan? So that none are now due to the seed of Abraham but those included in the new covenant, Jer. 31: 31, or the covenant of grace, which does not give any promise of preference to the present scattered Jews, either before or after conversion, nor any promise of an earthly Canaan. Nor does it appear to include any thing like a general or national conversion, and return to the church, more than of all the

world, unless it can be found Rom. 11: 12 and 26, of which the reader must judge. To my own mind, I confess that these passages seem to convey a different meaning, or at least do not certainly convey that meaning.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.

LETTER XVI.

DEAR SIR :—I will now bring these letters to a close, by saying that I wish you distinctly to understand that I do not at all rest the question of the return of the present scattered people calling themselves the children of Abraham to the land of Canaan, and Christ's reign over them there, on the foregoing intimations of what may be the meaning of certain predictions of the prophets, for I am no student of the prophets, but on the question, Who are the lawful heirs of the bequests made to the seed of Abraham ? This seems to be a question totally distinct from the question, What are the contents of the will ? and should surely be definitely settled before we look at the contents of the will ; for before I know whether I am an heir, the contents of the will are of little consequence to me. Indeed, it is always difficult to understand an ob-

scure will till we know distinctly of whom it speaks, and so of the Abrahamic will as expounded by the prophets.

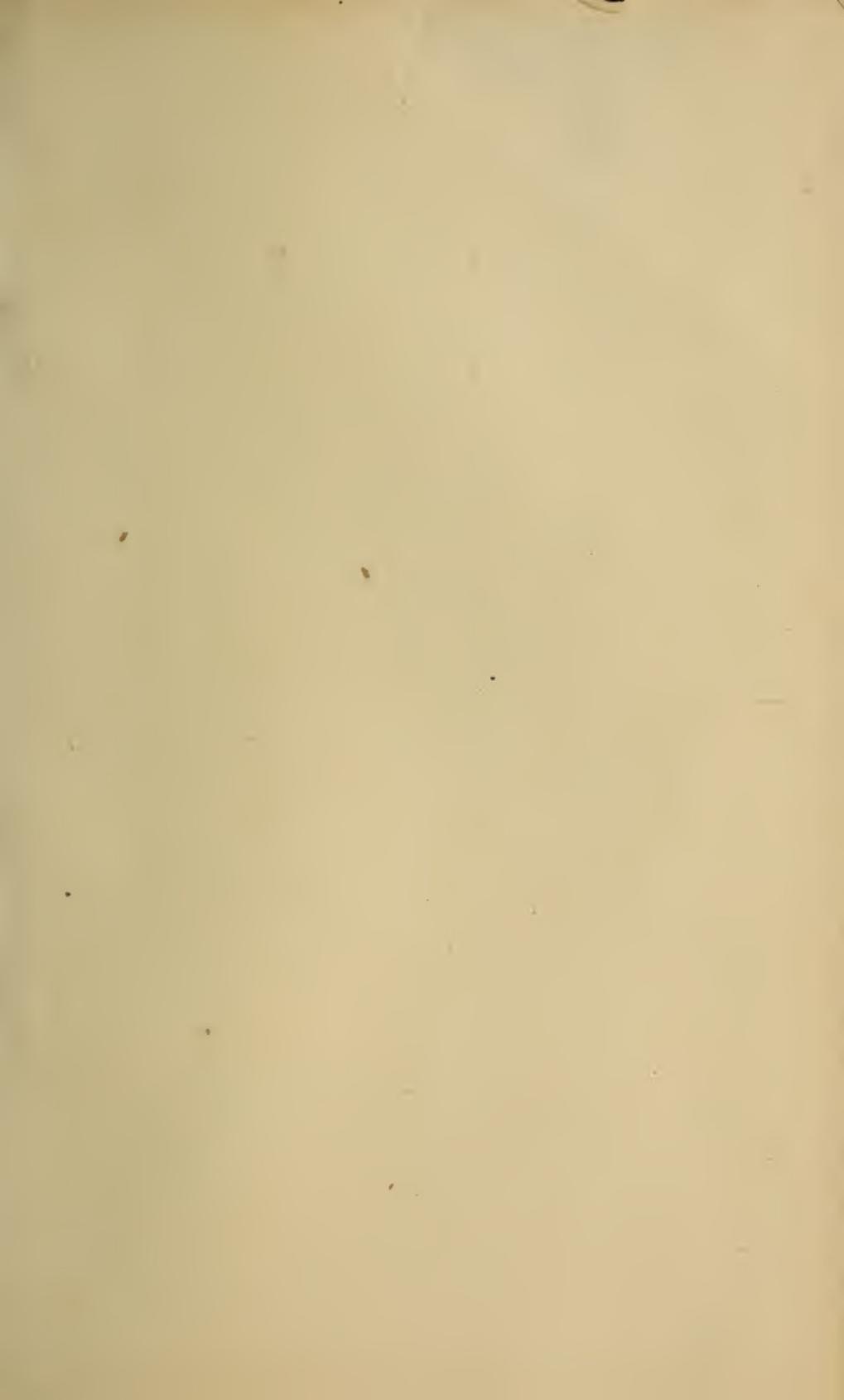
Again, then, we repeat, that if we have succeeded in showing that the present Jews are not the lawful heirs, but that they have broken their covenant and forfeited their heirship, then what the prophets say still belong to the seed of Abraham cannot at all be said of them, for they speak not of them, but of the seed, the covenant people, the lawful heirs ; and if we have succeeded in showing that according to the law of Moses, as explained by Peter, Christ, Paul, and John, true believers, wherever found, are the seed of Abraham and heirs of the promises, then whatever the prophets say relating to the present or future time, they say to them, and them only, for they always speak of the seed of Abraham, the covenant people of God ; so that whatever of prophetic promises are yet due to the seed of Abraham belong to true believers, or so it seems to me, for they constitute the old Abrahamic tree, of which there are not two, but one only, as ever, and form now the

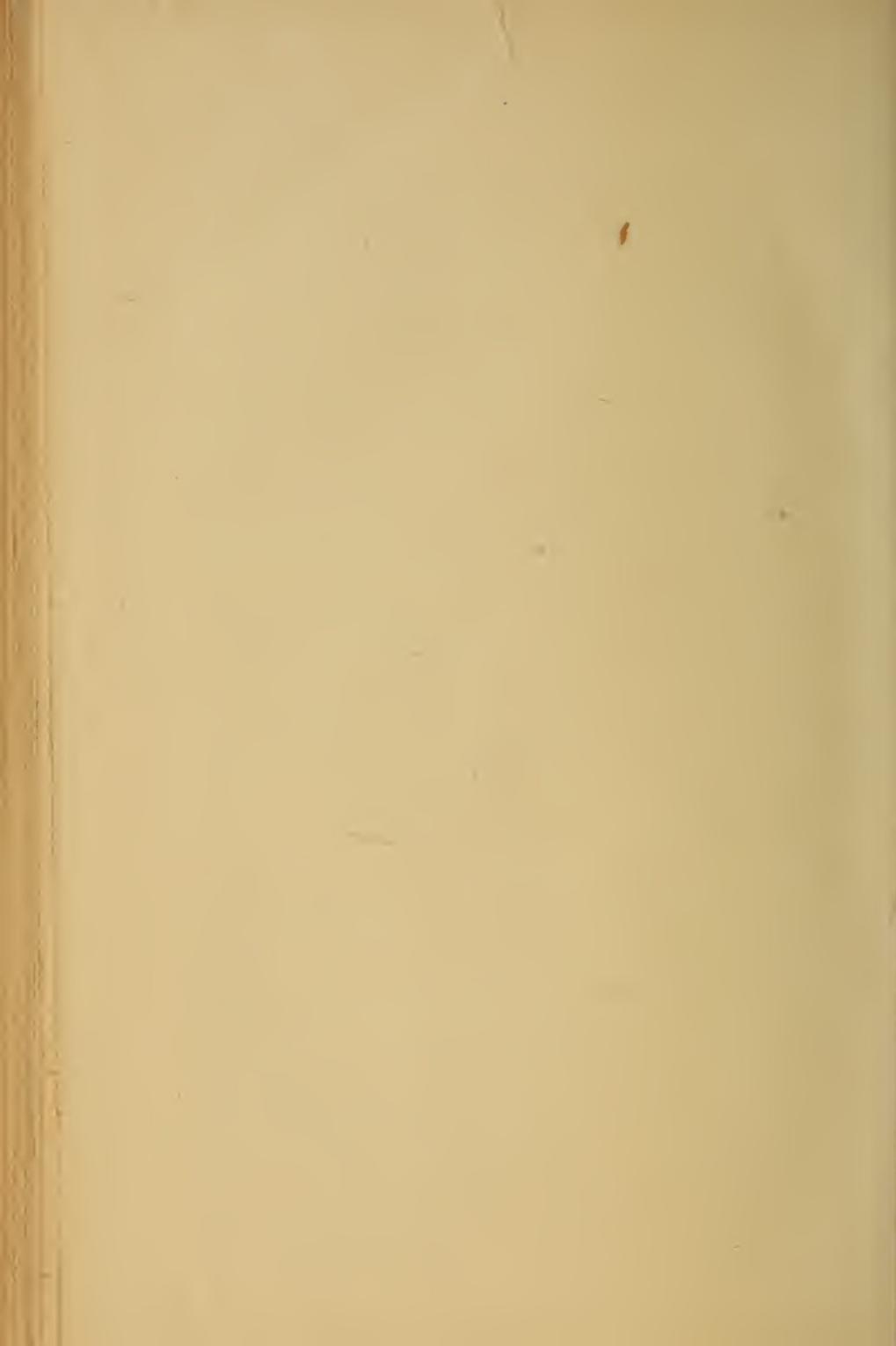
only house of Israel and house of Judah in existence. Upon that seed the prophetic eye was fixed, with that house the new covenant was to be made, and was made; from that house or tree all the dead branches were to be cut, and none but living ones to be engrafted, so that there could be no need of one saying to another, "Know the Lord," but only of exhorting one another to be faithful, and to take warning by the multitude of that house who were cut off, that they fell not under the same or greater condemnation. And now will you carefully and prayerfully examine the question of heirship, without mixing it up and obscuring it with supposed meanings of prophetic visions?

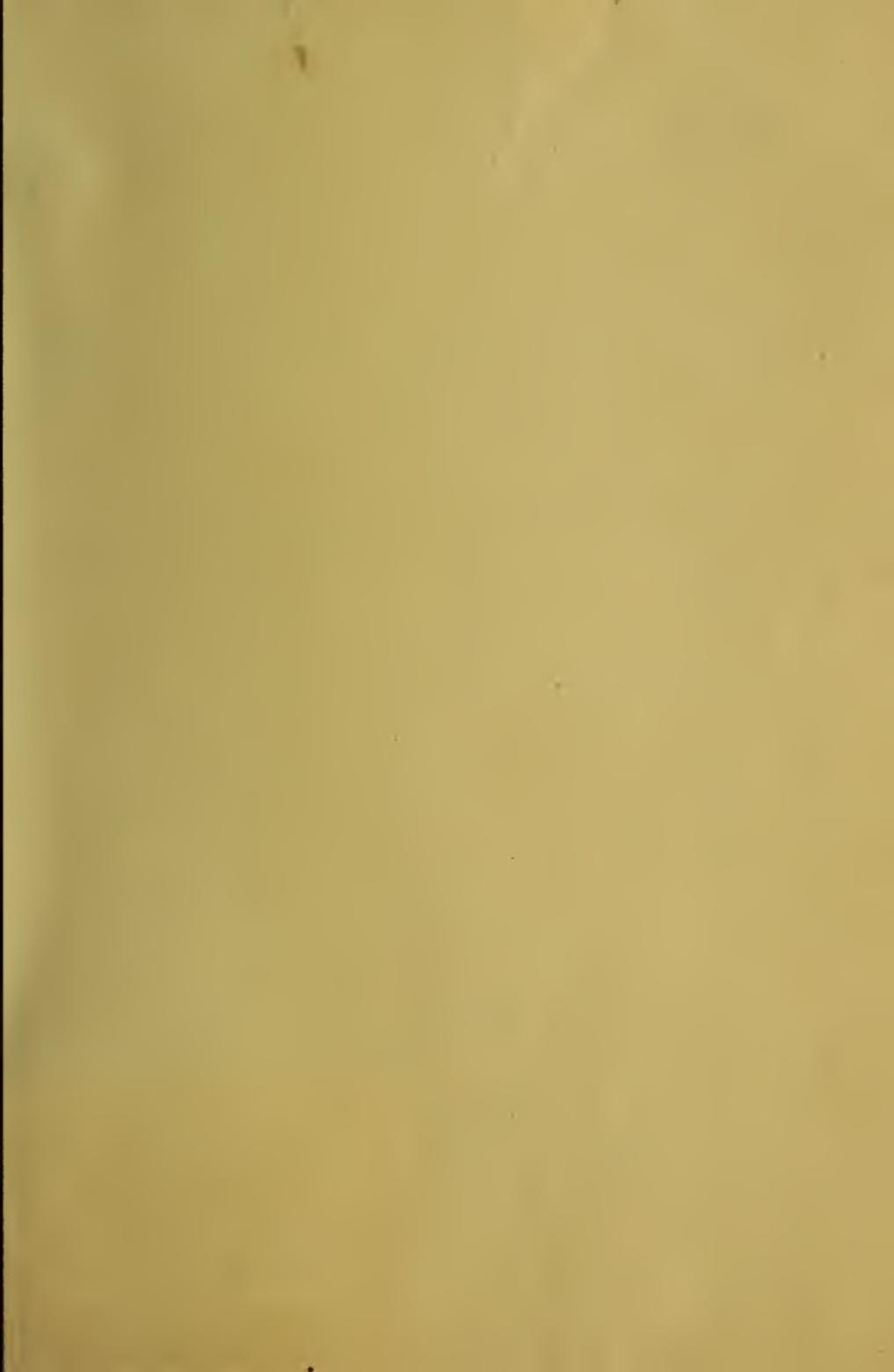
And may the Lord lead both you and me to such an understanding of this as shall enable us to perform our duty in carrying forward the revealed purposes of God respecting His Church and its appropriate duties to all unbelievers, no matter by what name they are called.

Yours, &c.,

A. W.







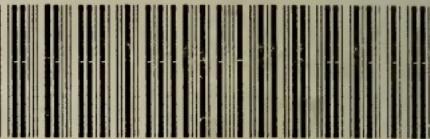
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